

AUGUST, 1911

PRICE 25 Cents

The MART SET

*A Magazine of
Cleverness*



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LONDON

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452 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

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FIFTH AVENUE & 37TH STREET
NEW YORK

THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
CLEVERNESS

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$3.00

SINGLE COPIES 25 CENTS

Entered at New York Post Office as second class mail matter
Issued monthly by John Adams Thayer Corporation

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452 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

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By JOHN LEE MAHIN

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We believe the readers of SMART SET will be interested in "advertising" as an economic force in the business world, and have therefore asked some of the best known and best informed advertisers to tell our readers what they know about this important subject.

It is not our intention to fill the SMART SET with a miscellaneous lot of advertisements. Advertisers who are admitted to the pages of this magazine come by "invitation only." We expect to make the advertising section just as clever and just as interesting as the body of the magazine. But the advertisements will always be selected with the greatest care and will always be in good taste.

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JOHN LEE MAHIN

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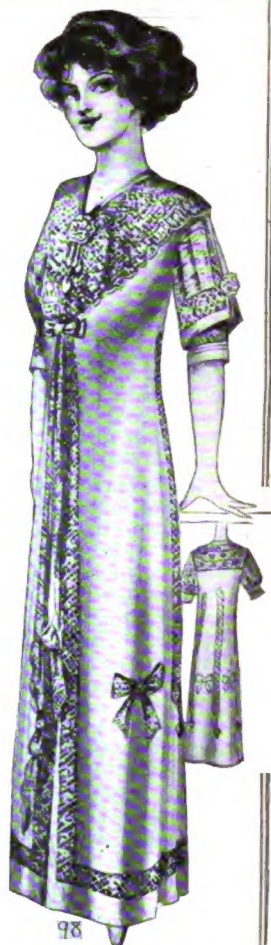
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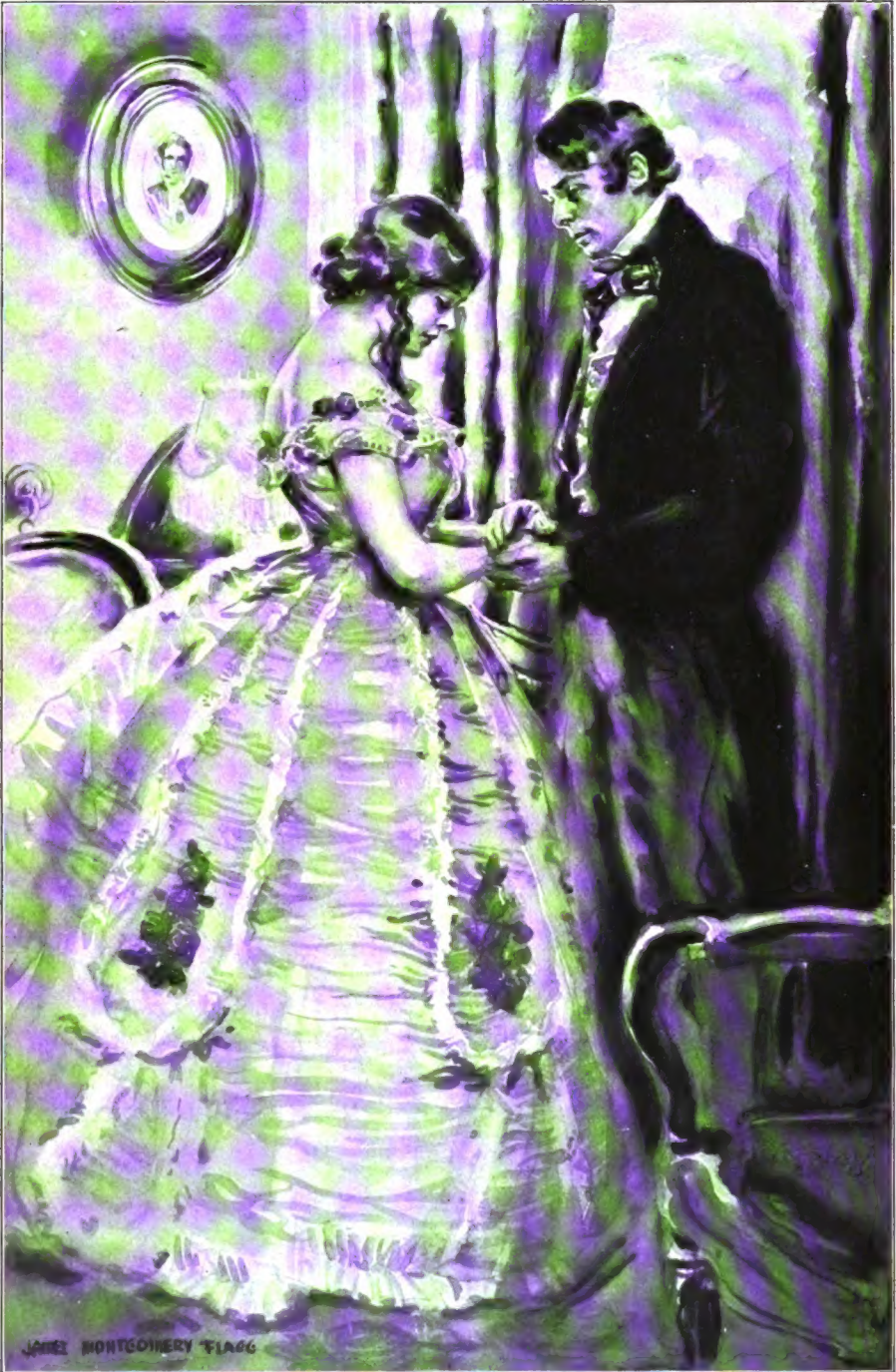
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Advertising reduces the price by increasing the sales

Believe me, if all those endearing young charms,
Which I gaze on so fondly to-day,
Were to change by to-morrow, and fleet in my arms,
Like fairy-gifts fading away,
Thou wouldst still be adored, as this moment thou art,
Let thy loveliness fade as it will,
And around the dear ruin each wish of my heart
Would entwine itself verdantly still.

It is not while beauty and youth are thine own,
And thy cheeks unprofaned by a tear,
That the fervour and faith of a soul can be known,
To which time will but make thee more dear;
No, the heart that has truly loved never forgets,
But as truly loves on to the close,
As the sun-flower turns on her god, when he sets,
The same look which she turn'd when he rose.

—THOMAS MOORE



BELIEVE ME, IF ALL THOSE ENDEARING YOUNG CHARMS



MRS. DE PEYSTER'S IDEA

By Leroy Scott

IT was a raw, ill-humored morning, yet too late in the spring for the ministration of steam heat, so the unseasonable May chill was banished from Mrs. De Peyster's sitting room by a wood fire that crackled in the grate—crackled most decorously, be it added, for Mrs. De Peyster's fire would no more have forgotten itself and shown a boisterous enthusiasm than would one of her well trained servants.

Beside a small steel safe, whose outer shell of exquisite cabinet work transformed that fortress against burglarious design into an article of furniture that harmonized with the comfortable elegance of a lady's boudoir, sat Mrs. De Peyster herself, carefully transferring her jewels from the trays of the safe to certain leathern cases. In the softly curtained light she looked a handsome fifty, and might have been more—but as to her exact years these pages beg leave to be politely noncommittal. She was dressed in rich and rather stiff simplicity; and even though engaged in so domestic an occupation, a perfect stranger could have read in her demeanor her social preëminence.

Before the well bred fire sat a lady whose tears had long since dried that

she had shed when she had bade good-bye to thirty. She was—I beg the lady's pardon—a trifle spare and a trifle pale, and though in a manner well enough dressed, her clothes had an air of bewilderment, of general irresolution, as though each article was uncertain in its mind as to whether it purposed to remain where it had been put.

A dozen years before, while Mr. De Peyster had still decked the earth, Mrs. De Peyster had graciously taken up her second cousin and had tried to discharge her duty in the important matter of securing her a husband. But her efforts had been futile, and to say that Mrs. De Peyster had not succeeded was to say that poor Olivetta Harmon was a failure indeed. She had lacked the fortune to attract the conservative investor who is looking for a good business proposition in her he promises to support; she had lacked the good looks to lure on the lover who throws himself romantically away upon a penniless pretty face; and she had not been clever enough to attract the man so heedlessly bold as to set sail upon the sea of matrimony with a woman of brains. And so, her brief summer at an end, she had receded to those remote and undiscov-

ered shores whereon dwell the poor relations of the Four Hundred, whereon she had lived respectably as a lady—for that she should ever appear a lady was due the social position of Mrs. De Peyster—upon an almost microscopic income, and from which bleak and distant land of second-cousindom she came in glad and proud obedience to fill an occasional vacant place at one of Mrs. De Peyster's second best dinner parties.

She had arrived a few moments before to bid her exalted cousin a preliminary adieu, and was now silently gazing in unenvious admiration at the jewels Mrs. De Peyster was transferring to their storage cases, when the door from the hallway opened and there entered a woman of middle age garbed in respectable, dull-hued black. Mrs. De Peyster locked the case upon her tiara and looked up from her labors.

"Well, Matilda, have you telephoned the safety deposit company?" she inquired.

"Yes, ma'am. A representative will call for the jewels at two."

"And Mr. Harvey? Did you get him?"

"Yes, ma'am. He said he would be here in an hour."

"Have him shown up the minute he arrives. That will do, Matilda. You may go on with the packing."

But the housekeeper, instead of accepting her dismissal, stood hesitant for a moment. "I thought you might like to know," she said a little fearfully, "that Mr. Jack is home."

Mrs. De Peyster raised her eyebrows, a severe expression upon her aristocratic face. "My nephew back! What has he to say for himself?"

"I haven't seen him, ma'am. James told me he had just come in."

"Why, Cousin Caroline, what has Jack been doing now?" put in Olivetta with an excited flutter, pushing into their places a few of the hairpins that threatened to bestrew the floor.

"I do not know. He disappeared from home a week ago, without a word, and there has not been a word from him since."

"How terrible! How unthoughtful!" exclaimed the sympathetic Olivetta.

"I shall see what he has to say for himself," said Mrs. De Peyster with a stately and slightly ominous air. "Matilda, you may now continue helping Marie with the packing."

But Matilda did not move toward the door that led into Mrs. De Peyster's bedroom. "Please, ma'am," she said, a little more fearfully than before, "there's something else."

"Something else?" queried Mrs. De Peyster.

"Yes, ma'am. There is a young man from the New York *Record* waiting in the drawing room. He wants—"

"Matilda," interrupted Mrs. De Peyster in stern reproof, "you are well enough acquainted with my invariable custom regarding reporters to have acted without referring this matter to me. It is a distinct annoyance," she added, "that one cannot make a single move without the newspapers following one."

"Indeed it is!" echoed the worshipful and indignant Olivetta. "But that is because of your position."

"I tried to send him away," said Matilda hurriedly. "And I told him you were never interviewed. But he was very persistent. And then he isn't a reporter, and he doesn't want an interview. He wants your picture."

"Wants my picture!" exclaimed Mrs. De Peyster.

"Yes, ma'am. He said the pictorial supplement of their next Sunday's paper was going to have a page of pictures of prominent society women who were sailing for Europe. He said something about calling the page 'Annual Exodus of Social Leaders.' He wants to print that painting of you by that new foreign artist in the center of the page." And Matilda pointed above the fireplace to a gold-framed likeness of Mrs. De Peyster—stately, aloof, remote, of an ineffable composure, a masterpiece of blue-bloodedness.

"You know my invariable custom; give him my invariable answer," was Mrs. De Peyster's crisp response.

"Pardon me, but—but, Cousin Car-

oline," put in Olivetta with eager diffidence, "don't you think this is different?"

"Different?" asked Mrs. De Peyster. "How?"

"This isn't at all like the ordinary offensive newspaper thing. A group of the most prominent social leaders, with you in the center of the page—with you in the center of them all, where you belong! Why, Caroline—why—why—" In her excitement for the just glorification of her cousin, Olivetta's power of speech went fluttering from her.

"Perhaps it may not be quite the same," admitted Mrs. De Peyster. "But I see no reason for departing from my custom."

"If not for your own sake, then—then for the artist's sake," Olivetta pursued, a little more eagerly, and a little more of diffidence in her eagerness. "You have taken up M. Dubois—you have been his most distinguished patron—you have been trying to get him properly started. To have his picture displayed like that—think how it will help M. Dubois!"

Mrs. De Peyster gave Olivetta a sharp look, as though she questioned the entire disinterestedness of this argument; then she considered an instant. "Matilda, you may give the man a photograph of the picture. But on the understanding that M. Dubois is to have conspicuous credit."

"Very well, ma'am," and Matilda went out.

"It's the *Plutonia*, isn't it, that you're sailing on?" inquired Olivetta, with the haste of one who is trying to get off very thin ice.

"Yes. On the *Plutonia*."

"How many times does this make that you've been over?"

"I do not know," Mrs. De Peyster answered carelessly, as she put a pearl necklace into its leather bed. "Thirty or forty, I dare say."

Olivetta's face filled with unenvious envy. "Oh, what a pleasure!"

"Going to Europe, Olivetta, is hardly a pleasure," corrected Mrs. De Peyster. "It is a duty one owes one's social position."

"Yes, I know that's true with you, Cousin Caroline. But with me—what a joy! When you took me over with you that summer we only did the watering places. But now"—a note of ecstatic desire came into her voice and she clasped her hands—"but now, to see Paris—the Louvre—the Luxembourg! It's the dream of my life!"

Mrs. De Peyster again gave her cousin a sharp, suspicious look. "Olivetta, have you been allowing M. Dubois to pay you any more attention?"

"No, no—of course not," cried Olivetta, and a sudden color tinted the too early autumn of her cheeks. "Do you think, after what you said—"

"M. Dubois is a very good artist, but—"

"I understand, Cousin Caroline," Olivetta put in hastily. "I think too much of your position to think of such a thing. Since you—since then—I have not spoken to him, and have only bowed to him once."

"We will say no more about it," returned Mrs. De Peyster with her duchesslike kindness. "By the bye, Olivetta, your comb is on the floor."

"So it is; it's always falling out." Olivetta picked it up, put it into place and with nervous hands tried to press into order loose flying locks of her rather scanty hair. A few moments passed, in which Olivetta, breathing a little rapidly, gazed silently into the open fire, from whose example of decorous self-restraint she seemed to draw an inspiration, for calm slowly succeeded her momentary agitation.

Presently Matilda returned and announced that the house was cleansed of the man from the newspaper. Mrs. De Peyster then ordered Matilda to help her maid with the packing. "And keep an eye on Marie to see that she does not crumple my gowns," she added. "I have found her careless of late in a number of matters."

After Matilda had disappeared into the bedroom, Olivetta eyed her cousin hesitantly for a moment. "Caroline, I—I don't like to carry tales, but there is something which I think I ought to tell you."

"Yes? What is it?" Mrs. De Peyster did not lift her eyes from her jewels.

"It's about Marie. The other day I was crossing Central Park, and a little distance ahead of me I saw Marie. It must have been her afternoon off. With her was a man, and they were acting very—very affectionately."

Mrs. De Peyster looked up. "Do you think she can be engaged?" she asked sharply.

"I'll tell you the rest, Caroline. I didn't mean to follow them, but it just—just happened that I did. They went west out of the Park, across Columbus Avenue and into a house. The janitress was sweeping off the steps. I asked her who the couple were that had gone in. She said it was Mr. Vanneau and—and—his wife!"

Mrs. De Peyster slowly rose. "Marie—married!" she ejaculated.

"So the janitress said."

Mrs. De Peyster crossed and opened her bedroom door. "Marie!" she called imperiously. "And, Matilda, you come, too."

Mrs. De Peyster took her stand in the center of the sitting room. There entered a pretty, dark-eyed young woman in a maid's cap and apron, and behind her the more sober presence of Matilda. The maid paused, affrighted by Mrs. De Peyster's demeanor.

"What you like, Mees De Peyster?" she asked.

"I believe you will remember, Marie, that when you applied for the position of lady's maid with me six months ago," Mrs. De Peyster began in a calm and resolute voice, "I told you that I made it a rule to have no married servant. As I desired that you should understand my reasons, I then informed you that I once had a cook and a footman who were married, and who paid so much attention to each other that they had no time to pay attention to me. I then asked you if you were married."

"Ye—yes, Mees De Peyster."

"And you informed me that you were not."

"Yes, Mees De Peyster."

"And on that understanding I employed you. But I have just now been

informed that you are married. Is that true?"

Marie had clasped her hands. "Oh, Mees De Peyster," she cried, "I—"

"I desire no scene," Mrs. De Peyster interrupted. "Are you married? Yes or no?"

"Ye—yes, Mees De Peyster."

"I have no desire to pass judgment on you," Mrs. De Peyster continued. "I try to be fair and just and generous with my servants. If—"

"Oh, everyone zey all say madame is ze best of mistresses!" exclaimed Marie, beginning to sob.

"If you had been what you declared yourself to be you could have remained indefinitely. Matilda there came to me as my nephew's nurse over twenty years ago, and has been with me ever since—happy, as she will tell you, with no desire to change her state whatever."

"N—no—none—none at all," Matilda corroborated hastily.

Mrs. De Peyster continued in her tone of exact justice: "You have a perfect right to be married or unmarried. I have a perfect right to have the sort of servants I prefer. But since you are not what you declared yourself to be, I no longer require your services."

"But, madame—madame—"

"No scene, I command you. Matilda, see that Marie is paid in full to the end of her month. That is all."

Matilda, somewhat pale and agitated herself, started to lead Marie, choking down the sobs, out of the room, with Mrs. De Peyster looking on with her invariable calm majesty.

II

At just this moment there was a smart rap at the door; it was partly opened, and a cheery masculine voice called out: "May I come in, aunt?"

"You may," stiffly responded Mrs. De Peyster.

The door swung entirely open, and there appeared a young man of twenty-three or four, good-natured confidence in his manner, flawlessly dressed, with hands that were swathed in bandages.

He crossed limpingly to Mrs. De Peyster, who stood regarding him with stern unwelcome.

"Good morning, aunt—glad to get back," he said, imprinting an undaunted kiss upon her stately cheek.

Her reply was a continuance of her severe look, and the young man turned to Mrs. De Peyster's faithful satellite. "Hello, Olivetta. Hands out of commission. You'll have to shake my elbow." And he held out his angled arm.

"Good morning, Jack," responded Olivetta in trepidation, hardly daring to be gracious where Mrs. De Peyster had been cool.

Jack slipped an arm across Matilda's shoulders. "How are you, Matilda? Glad to see you again."

"And I'm glad to see you again, Mr. Jack," returned Matilda, with a look of stealthy affection.

"Please go, Matilda," said Mrs. De Peyster crisply. "And now, Jack," she continued with frigid dignity after the two servants had withdrawn, "I trust that you will explain your absence and your long silence."

"Certainly, auntie," said Jack, pushing a chair before the fire and letting himself down into it slowly and with extreme care, and crossing his legs. "I got a sudden invitation from Reggie Atwater to—"

"You know I do not approve of that young scapegrace!"

"I know you don't; and I suppose that's one reason I didn't tell you beforehand what I was up to."

"What have you been doing?"

"Reggie asked me to go on a long trip to try out his new car. It's a hummer—hundred and twenty horse-power, and—"

"Such cars are dangerous," severely commented Mrs. De Peyster.

"I know. That's another reason I didn't tell you—especially since we were planning a fifteen-hundred-mile lark."

"What's the matter with your hands?" suddenly demanded Mrs. De Peyster.

Jack gazed at the bandaged members. "You were right about that car being dangerous, auntie," said he. "I'll confess the whole business. We were whiz-

zing around a corner coming into Yonkers this morning, when the machine skidded. I was shot out but managed to fall on my hands. But the skin of my palms—"

"Oh!" shuddered Olivetta.

"Were you much hurt?" asked Mrs. De Peyster, forgetting her dignity for a moment in her concern.

"Jarred up a bit—scratched up a bit—but the patient will recover," commented Jack cheerfully.

"I trust this experience has been a lesson to you," said Mrs. De Peyster with renewed severity.

"Oh, it has—a big lesson!" agreed Jack heartily.

"Then I trust you will do nothing of the kind again."

"I trust I won't have to."

There was rather an odd quality in Jack's tone. "Won't have to? What do you mean?"

"You've questioned me a lot, auntie. I'd like to put a few leading questions to you. And—u'm—alone. Olivetta," he remarked pleasantly, "do you know that Sherlock Holmes found it an instructive and valuable occupation to count the stair steps in a house? Suppose you run out for five minutes and count 'em. I'll bet you a box of—"

Olivetta had risen, a little indignantly. "I never eat candy."

"Well, a box of hairpins," continued Jack, clumsily picking up one from the floor, "that there aren't more than seventy-five."

"Oh, if you want me out of the way, all right," said Olivetta, sticking the pin into place.

"Here, is that your purse?" asked Jack, fishing an open purse from beneath the chair Olivetta had just vacated.

"Yes; I'm always losing it. I lost two—"

"I must say, Olivetta," put in Mrs. De Peyster reprovingly, "that you really must not be so careless."

Jack was looking at a card that had fallen from the purse. "Hello! And a ticket to the exhibition of paintings of—"

"Give it to me!" And Olivetta, with

suddenly crimson face, snatched purse and card from Jack's hands. "I'll wait in your bedroom, Caroline, and look at your new gowns." And with a rapidity that approached instantaneity she disappeared.

"Jack," his aunt demanded suspiciously, "what was that card?"

"Just an old ticket to the opening of the spring exhibit of the American Society of Painters," said Jack easily. And without giving Mrs. De Peyster an instant in which to pursue the matter further, he awkwardly pushed her favorite chair toward the fire to a place beside his own. "Come, sit down, auntie. There's a lot of things I want to tell you."

Mrs. De Peyster lowered herself into the chair. "Well?"

"Well, first of all, auntie, I want to make a kick."

She frowned. "How often must I request you not to use such common expressions?"

"All right—all right," said he. "Suppose I say, then, that I'm dissatisfied."

"Dissatisfied!" She straightened up. "Dissatisfied! What about? Do I not allow you all the money you want?"

"Yes."

"And have I not practically arranged a match between you and Ethel Harrison? Ethel will have ten millions some day."

"Yes, yes—I know."

"And yet you say you are dissatisfied! What more can you want?"

"Well, for one thing, to go to school," was Jack's amiable response.

"Go to school! Why—why, you've already had the best of educations! Exeter—Harvard—not to speak of private tutors!"

"And what did I learn? That is," he added, "over and above being a fairly decent halfback and learning how to spend money gracefully?"

"I trust," said Mrs. De Peyster with all her dignity, "that you learned to be a gentleman!"

"Oh, I suppose I learned that all right," Jack acquiesced. "And I've been working hard at the profession ever since—from sixteen to twenty hours a

day, with no half-holidays and no Sundays off. I can't stand it any longer. So I've decided to go on strike."

"Strike!" exclaimed his aunt, bewildered.

"Yes. For better conditions. I'm tired of loafing such long hours. I'd like a little leisure in which to work."

"Work!" cried Mrs. De Peyster.

"Yes—there, I've got it out at last! I'd like to do something worth doing. I'd like to go to work."

"Work!" repeated his aunt—and human voice could not express a horror greater than did hers. "Work! Jack—you're not in earnest?"

He held on her a clear-eyed, humorous, but resolute face. "Don't I look in earnest?"

He did; and his aunt could only dazedly repeat: "Work! You go to work?"

"Oh, not at once. No, thank you! I want to ask you to give me a little proper education first that will equip me to do something. You've spent—how much have you spent on my education, aunt? Tens and tens of thousands, I know. Pretty big investment on the whole. Now how large returns do you suppose I can draw on that investment?"

"I was not thinking about dividends; I was thinking about fitting you for your station," returned his aunt stiffly.

"Well, as for me, I've been thinking of late about how much I could get out of that investment. I've wanted to test myself and find what I was worth—as a worker." He leaned a little closer to Mrs. De Peyster. "I say, auntie," he said confidentially, "you remember that little explanation I just gave you of my absence?"

"About your trip in that high-powered automobile?"

"That was just a high-powered fib—just a bit of diplomatic romance—for Olivetta's consumption."

"Then where have you been?" demanded Mrs. De Peyster.

"Prospecting. Prospecting to find out just how much that hundred thousand or two or three you've sunk in me is worth. And I've found out. Its present value is not quite nine a week."

"You mean—"

"I mean I've been at work."

"At work!" Mrs. De Peyser slowly rose and stared down at him. "At work!" she gasped. "But that skidding motor car? Those hands?"

"Blisters, auntie dear. Most horrible blisters."

"You've worked—you've worked—at what?"

"Well, you see, Aunt Caroline, if I could have got a job as a railroad president right off the bat, I suppose I might have taken it. But the best I could do was in a water main trench at the busy end of a shovel."

"J-a-c-k M-o-r-g-a-n!" his appalled aunt slowly exclaimed—so slowly that each letter seemed to come out by itself in horrified disjunction. "Well, at any rate," she declared with returning vigor, "I'm glad you've had enough of it to bring you to your senses and bring you home!"

"Oh, I've had enough all right. My cubic contents of ache is—well, you wouldn't believe a man of my size could hold so much discomfort. But that isn't the only thing that brought me home. It was—er—I might say, aunt, that it was suggested to me."

"Suggested? I do not understand."

"If you will permit the use of so vulgar an expression, I was 'fired.'"

"Fired?"

"Yes. The foreman intimated—I won't repeat his language, aunt—he intimated, in a way that left no doubt as to his meaning, that I was not quite up to the nine-per-week standard. I'll be honest with you and admit it didn't break my heart. I still wanted to work, but I decided that I didn't want to start life at its pick and shovel end if I could help it. So here I am, auntie, asking you to give me a little real education—say as a mining engineer, or something like that."

Mrs. De Peyser was trembling with indignation. "J-a-c-k M-o-r-g-a-n!" she gasped, again a letter at a time. "J-a-c-k M-o-r-g-a-n! I'm—I'm astounded at you!"

"I thought you might be—a little," he admitted.

"I think you might have some consideration for me. And my position."

"I suppose I am selfish. But you don't know what dreary hard work loafing becomes."

"I won't have it!" cried Mrs. De Peyser, her blue-corpuscled ire beginning to rouse. "I won't have it!"

"You mean that you are not going to add a few thousand more to my two hundred thousand's worth of education?"

"I certainly shall not!"

"Then," said Jack with a sigh, "I suppose, after all, I've got to start in at the pick and shovel end."

"No, you shall not! I have reared you to be a gentleman. And you are going to be a gentleman. Think what Ethel Harrison would say to a husband that worked!"

"Ethel Harrison! That's right; I'd forgotten all about Ethel." He gazed into the fire a moment, painfully recrossed his legs and looked calmly back up into Mrs. De Peyser's face. "I suppose I might as well tell you, aunt, that that deal with Ethel Harrison is all off."

"Off?"

Jack slowly nodded his head. "Yes, all off."

"And why, if you please?"

"Oh, for several reasons," he returned mildly. "But one of the reasons is that I happen to be engaged to someone else."

"Engaged!" gasped Mrs. De Peyser, falling back. "And without my knowing it! Who is she?"

"Mary Jones."

"Mary Jones! I never heard of her. Who's her father?"

"First name Henry, I believe."

"I don't mean his name. But who is he—what's his position—what're his financial affiliations?"

"Oh, I see! Mary told me he runs a shoe store up in Buffalo."

"A shoe store! A shoe store!"

"Or perhaps," Jack corrected, "it was a grocery. I'm not certain."

"Oh!" gasped Mrs. De Peyser. "Oh! And—and this—this—Mary person—"

"She plays the piano, and is going to be a professional."

For a moment Mrs. De Peyster's horror was inarticulate; then it began to regain its paralyzed power of speech. "What! You throw over—Ethel Harrison—for a little pianist! You compare a girl like—like that—to Ethel Harrison!"

"Compare them? Not for one little minute, auntie dear. For Mary has brains, and—"

"Stop!" exploded Mrs. De Peyster in majestic rage. "Young man, have you considered the social disgrace you are plunging us all into? But—but surely you cannot be in earnest!"

He looked imperturbably up into her face. "Not in earnest, auntie? I'm as earnest as a preacher on Sunday."

"Then—then—" At first the words would not come out; she stood trembling, clutching the back of her chair. "Then I beg to request you, Mr. Morgan," she said, striving to speak calmly, "that you move out of this house within an hour. And I beg to inform you—"

"Oh, come, aunt, let's don't have a row over this. You know I love you, and will do anything for you that's reasonable."

"And I beg to inform you—" Mrs. De Peyster was going on implacably, when her door opened and there entered a rotund, middle-aged man, whose appearance was as impressive of security as the marble frontage of a bank.

"I beg pardon; I fear I come inopportunistly," he said, as he sighted Mrs. De Peyster's militant attitude. "But I was told to come right up. I'll just wait—"

"Do not go, Mr. Harvey," Mrs. De Peyster commanded, as he started to withdraw. "On the other hand, your arrival is most opportune. Please come here."

As Mr. Harvey crossed the room, Jack with much pain and effort raised himself from his chair. "Good morning, Mr. Harvey," he said cheerfully. "Excuse me for not shaking hands. Just a little automobile accident. Been telling aunt about it."

Mrs. De Peyster glared at him, then crossed to the open safe from which she had been removing her jewels, took out

a document and returned to the two men. She had something of the ominous air of a tragedy queen who is foreshadowing an approaching climax.

"Mr. Harvey, I do not care to go into explanations," said she. "But I desire you to be a witness to my act."

"I am at your service, Mrs. De Peyster."

"This paper is my will. As my man of affairs, I believe you are acquainted with its contents."

"I am."

"It gives the bulk of my fortune to my nephew here, my closest relation."

"Yes."

"His share amounts to three million or thereabouts."

"Thereabouts."

Mrs. De Peyster took two rustling, majestic steps toward her grate. "Until my nephew gives me very definite assurance that his conduct will be more suitable to me and my position, he is no longer my nephew. And so saying she tossed the will upon the fire. She allowed a moment of effective stage silence to elapse. "That is all, Mr. Morgan. You are excused."

Jack stood and watched the flaming will flicker down to a glowing ash, one bandaged hand slowly smoothing his blond hair. "So there goes three million! Well, auntie," he sighed, shaking his head, "I've burnt quite a little money in my time, but I never thought I'd make such a little blaze out of a pile like that."

III

For several moments after Jack had withdrawn, Mrs. De Peyster stood in majestic silence beside the mantelpiece.

"We will forget this incident, Mr. Harvey," she said at length. "Be seated if you please."

But first Mr. Harvey, with the sober gallantry proper in an agent to families of the first blood, placed his hands upon the back of Mrs. De Peyster's favorite chair and pushed it slightly toward her with the most deferential of obese little bows. His client seated, he then took the chair Jack had vacated.

"I sent for you," began Mrs. De Peyster, "to learn in detail what you had been able to do for me about a cottage in Newport."

"You said you wished to be in Newport from—"

"The middle of July to early in September."

"The house, of those available, which I thought would come nearest suiting you is Heron's Nest."

"You mean the cottage Mrs. Van der Grift had last season?"

"Yes."

"You need not describe it, then. I know it perfectly. It is exactly what I desire; elegant, but not showy like the cottages of the new people. And the cottages?"

"Ten thousand for the season."

"Quite satisfactory. I hope you have taken a lease."

"I have an option till tomorrow." A slight nervousness that had been in Mr. Harvey's manner became now more marked. "Before definitely taking the house, there is a—a little circumstance with which I felt I should acquaint you."

"Yes?"

"I hardly need remind you that the bulk of your money is invested in Blue Creek Copper."

"A perfectly good stock, I believe," Mrs. De Peyster commented.

"Perfectly good—perfectly sound," Mr. Harvey hastily agreed. "But there has existed a certain possibility in the company's affairs for some time of which I hesitated to inform you. I did not wish to give you any unnecessary concern, which would have been the case if I had spoken to you and if the situation had terminated happily."

"And what is the situation to which you refer?"

"The company's mines have recently been tied up by a great strike; it has had to pay heavy damages in a lawsuit; and a number of other misfortunes of a similar character have fallen upon it."

"Yes, I have vaguely heard something to this effect," said Mrs. De Peyster.

"It—it was the possibility arising from this situation that I hesitated to suggest to you."

"What possibility?"

Mr. Harvey's nervousness was now becoming quite acute. "The possibility, Mrs. De Peyster, that—er—that in view of the circumstances the directors of the company might—er—might decide to pass a dividend for this quarter."

Mrs. De Peyster started forward. "Do you mean to say, Mr. Harvey, that such a possibility exists?"

"It's—er—rather more than a possibility."

"More than a possibility?"

A fresh handkerchief, guided by a very uncomfortable hand, went across Mr. Harvey's countenance.

"Yes. In fact, it's a—a fact."

"A fact?"

"The directors met yesterday—and voted to declare no dividend."

"No dividend!" Mrs. De Peyster gazed stupefied into the face of her agent. "No dividend! Then—then—my income?"

"I am very sorry—but I trust you have enough in your bank for your present plans."

Mrs. De Peyster sank back in her chair and laid one jeweled hand across her eyes. For a moment she was dazed by the disaster, not hearing Mr. Harvey's professional encouragement about the stock being perfectly solid. But it was not befitting the De Peyster dignity to exhibit consternation even before one so near as one's man of affairs; so after a moment she removed her hand and said with an excellent imitation of calm: "Thank you very much, Mr. Harvey, for your information. I will give it my consideration."

Mr. Harvey knew that he was dismissed. He rose. "And the Newport house?" he queried.

"I shall send you my instructions concerning it a little later."

When Mr. Harvey was out of the room, Mrs. De Peyster dismissed her dignity and sat, an almost nerveless bundle, staring into her fire. She was not rich, as the rich count riches. Nor did she desire greater wealth; in fact, she looked down upon the possessors of those huge fortunes acquired during the last generation as upon beings of an in-

ferior order. It was blood discs that gave her her supremacy, not vulgar discs of gold. She had enough to maintain the De Peyster station, but just enough; and she had so adjusted her scale of living that her expenses exactly consumed her normal income.

She heard Matilda enter, pause, then pass into the bedroom, but did not look up; nor a moment later, when Olivetta reëntered from the bedroom, did she at first raise her dejected head.

"Why, what's the matter, Cousin Caroline?" cried Olivetta.

There was no occasion for maintaining an appearance before Olivetta, who was almost as faithful and devoted as though a very member of her body; so Mrs. De Peyster related her misfortune, interrupted by frequent interjections from her sympathetic cousin. "Do you realize what it means, Olivetta?" she concluded in a benumbed voice. "It means that, except for the few thousands I have on hand—a mere nothing—I am penniless until next quarter day. I cannot go to Europe. I cannot go to Newport."

Olivetta was full of consternation. "But can't you cut down expenses and remain in town? You have enough for that."

"Remain in town, when everybody is leaving!" cried Mrs. De Peyster. "Are you out of your senses, Olivetta? Why, people would never stop talking about it!"

"Of course—you're right; forgive me," stammered Olivetta. "But you might go to some modest resort for the summer—or—or—go to Europe in a more modest way."

"Olivetta, you grow more absurd every moment!" exclaimed Mrs. De Peyster. "You know it has long been my custom to spend the first half of the summer in Europe, in a style befitting me, and to spend the second half in Newport. To do less would set people talking, and might endanger my position."

"Of course! Of course!" cried the humbled Olivetta. "It is quite out of the question. But couldn't you—I know my head is good for nothing—couldn't you borrow, or sell something?"

"You should know, Olivetta," said Mrs. De Peyster severely, "that it is against my principles, as it was against my husband's principles, to draw upon my capital. And you should know that it is strictly against my principles to borrow. Besides, how could I pay back? My manner of living leaves me no surplus with which to repay a loan. I hope you realize my dilemma."

"It is terrible—terrible!" Olivetta's tone was slow and full of awed dismay. "You must maintain your social position, and there is no money."

"Just so."

Detailed horrors of the situation began to enter Olivetta's mind. "And your passage is taken on the *Plutonia*—and it has been widely announced that you are leaving for Europe—and that newspaper is going to print your picture among the social leaders who have sailed."

Mrs. De Peyster stood up. "I simply *must* sail!" she said desperately.

"Of course you must. Can't you think of some way out of it? I never knew you unequal to an emergency."

Mrs. De Peyster, her brow knitted with agitated thought, walked slowly to one of her windows and stood looking down into the aristocratic quiet of Madison Avenue. Olivetta watched her intently, waiting for the brilliant plan that would be the result of her cousin's cogitations. But the minutes passed; Mrs. De Peyster did not move, and Olivetta's gaze wandered about the large, luxurious sitting room. Her mind roamed afar to the desolate realm which she inhabited, and she thought of her own sitting room, dark and stingily furnished and rather threadbare, in which she was expecting to spend the summer, save for a few weeks at a respectable poor relations' resort. She sighed.

"If it weren't for your social position," she said, half to herself, "it really wouldn't be so bad to spend the summer here."

Mrs. De Peyster must have heard, for she turned slowly about and gazed at Olivetta—gazed at her steadily. And gradually, as she gazed, her whole appearance changed. The consternation

on her face was succeeded by a calm resolution; her poise and dignity returned.

"You have an idea, Caroline?" cried Olivetta, struck by her look.

"Wait!"

Mrs. De Peyster stood silent for yet a few more moments; then completely her dignified and composed self, she stepped toward her bedroom. Olivetta's eyes followed her in wondering, worshipful fascination.

Mrs. De Peyster opened the door. "Matilda!"

The housekeeper instantly appeared. "Yes, Mrs. De Peyster."

"Matilda, give orders to have John called, and to be waiting in the hall till I summon him. Come back immediately."

"But, Cousin Caroline, what is it?" asked Olivetta excitedly, as Matilda went out.

"Wait!" said Mrs. De Peyster in her majestic tone.

A minute passed, Mrs. De Peyster standing composedly by the fireplace, Olivetta gazing at her in throbbing suspense. Then Matilda returned. Mrs. De Peyster summoned her to her side.

"Matilda, you have proved your loyalty to me by twenty years of service," she began, "and you, Olivetta, I know, are completely devoted to me. So I know you both will faithfully execute my requests. But I must ask you to promise never to breathe a word of what I tell you, and what we do."

"Me!" cried Olivetta. "Never a syllable!"

"Nor I, ma'am—never!" declared Matilda.

"But first, Matilda, I must acquaint you with a situation that has just arisen;" and Mrs. De Peyster went on and outlined her predicament. "And now here are my orders, Matilda. The house is to be boarded up as usual. All the servants are to be sent away except John. You, Matilda, are to remain here alone in charge of the house, as has been your custom. The report that I am sailing is to be reaffirmed. But in reality—"

"Yes, in reality?" cried the excited Olivetta.

"In reality," continued Mrs. De

Peyster calmly, for she knew how a dénouement was heightened by a quiet manner—"in reality, I shall, during the entire summer, stay here in my own house."

"Stay here!" ejaculated Olivetta.

"Stay here!" exclaimed Matilda.

"Stay here. Here in my suite. Secretly, of course. No one but you two will ever know of it. By staying here I shall be practically at no expense. But the world will think I am in Europe, and my position will be saved."

Staggered as she was, Olivetta had remaining a few fragments of reason. "But—but, Caroline! You cannot merely announce that you are going abroad. You are a person of importance—your every move is observed. People will see that you do not sail. How will you get around that?"

It sounded a poser, but Mrs. De Peyster was unruffled. "Very simply, Olivetta. You shall sail in my stead."

"Me!" cried Olivetta, yet more bewildered.

"Yes, you."

"But—but, if you cannot afford Europe for yourself, how can you afford it for me?"

"It would take a great many thousands for me to go in the manner that is expected of me—I cannot afford that. For you, Olivetta, since the passage is already paid, it would take but a few hundred—and that I can afford."

"You—you mean that I am to pass for you?"

"Yes."

"But I never can! People will know the difference!"

"People will never see you," returned the calm voice of Mrs. De Peyster. The *Plutonia* sails early in the morning. You will go on board with my trunks late the night before, heavily veiled. Since no one must see you on the way over, you must of course keep to your cabin. You must be seasick."

"But I am never seasick!" cried Olivetta.

"Then you must stay in bed anyhow and pretend to be. You are to be too ill to receive any friends who may chance to be on board. Your stewardess will

bring your meals to your stateroom. When the boat arrives you must wait till everyone else is off, and when you land you must again be heavily veiled and be too sick to speak to anyone. Once you are in Paris—"

"Yes, there's the difficulty!"

"Not so great as you think. I shall give you full directions what to do. Once you are in Paris, you quietly disappear. It will become known that Mrs. De Peyster has gone off on a long motor trip through the south of Europe. With Mrs. De Peyster started on this trip, you become yourself, and you see Europe just as you please."

"Oh!" ejaculated Olivetta, drawing in a deep breath.

"But please, ma'am," put in Matilda, "why could you not go over yourself and then slip away to some modest resort?"

"So many people know me I would be sure to be seen and recognized—and then think of the talk! No, that would never do; I have considered all the possibilities; my plan is best."

"Of course you're right, ma'am," agreed Matilda.

"On the way back, Olivetta, you are to preserve the same precautions as on the way over. And to avoid any possible difficulty in getting into the house, I shall provide you with a key to the house and one to my sitting room."

"But you, ma'am?" said Matilda.

"In the meantime you cannot stay cooped up all summer in this room!"

"I do not intend to," returned Mrs. De Peyster with her consummate calm, which assured her co-conspirators that they could lean untroubled upon her unblundering brain. "Matilda, will you please have John come in?"

Matilda, bewildered but obedient, stepped to the door, and a moment later followed in the most clean shaven, the most stiffly perpendicular, the most deferentially dignified, the most irreproachably expressionless of men servants. He was the ultimate development of his kind. It seems almost a sacrilege to add that he was past man's perfect prime, and to hint that perhaps his

scanty, unstreaked hair sought surreptitious rejuvenation in a dye bottle.

"John, Matilda will acquaint you with certain alterations in my plans," began his mistress. "Her information I desire to supplement by saying that she will remain in the house alone during my absence; that you are to keep to your quarters in the stable and not enter the house; and that you are to arrange to take, at my expense, all your meals outside."

John inclined his body slightly, as if to say, "Yes, my lady."

"And in order to give the horses proper exercise, and to relieve Matilda's monotony, I desire you to take Matilda out driving every evening."

Again John bowed a "Yes, my lady."

"You understand this perfectly?"

John's lips executed one of their rare movements. "Perfectly, Mrs. De Peyster."

"Very well." Mrs. De Peyster dismissed him with a wave of her hand, and John made the exit of a minister from his queen.

"You don't mean—" began Matilda, almost breathless.

"Yes, I mean that I shall go out driving nightly in your clothes," responded Mrs. De Peyster.

"But—but—" gasped Matilda.

"Have no fear. I shall of course be veiled, and John is the best trained, the most incurious of servants." Mrs. De Peyster, looking her most majestic, stood waiting for the outburst of approval, the just tribute to one who has conceived a supernally clever and flawless scheme. "Well now, Matilda," she inquired, "what do you think of the whole plan?"

"Since you thought it out, I—I suppose it's all right," stammered Matilda.

"And you, Olivetta, what do you think?"

"Me!" cried Olivetta, who for the last minute had with difficulty silenced her ecstasy. "Paris—the Louvre—the Luxembourg—Versailles!" She flung her arms about Mrs. De Peyster's neck amid a shower of hairpins. "Oh, Caroline—Caroline! It's—it's simply glorious!"

IV

It was four days later. Jack Morgan had moved out; the servants had been discharged; the front doorway and the windows had been boarded up; the house wore the proper countenance of respectable desertion—and up in her sitting room, lighted only by little diamond panes in her thick shutters, sat Mrs. De Peyster reading the social page of the daylight edition of an evening paper. From this she gleaned that Mrs. Henry De Peyster had sailed early that morning on the *Plutonia*, having gone on board late the night before. Also she learned that Mrs. De Peyster would not be back, as was her custom, for the Newport season, but was going to make an extended motor trip off the main traveled roads, perhaps penetrating as far as the beautiful but rarely visited Balkan states.

Mrs. De Peyster was well satisfied as she rested at her ease in her favorite chair. It would not be too much to say that she was very proud; for hers was certainly a happy plan, a plan few intellects could have evolved. Thus far it had worked to perfection, and there was no doubt but that it would work so to the end—for, although Olivetta, to be sure, was rather careless, the instructions given her, the arrangements made in her behalf, were so complete that any mis-carriage could not possibly have Olivetta for its source.

Also Mrs. De Peyster was at heart honestly contented. She had spoken truly when she had told Olivetta that Europe was old to her and had become merely a social duty. Of that fatiguing obligation to her position she was glad to be relieved. The past season had been a very trying one, and she was very tired, for she could no longer stand unwearied the labor required to maintain her dignity that she had stood in her youth and in her prime. By the present arrangement, which she regarded as nothing short of an inspiration, her social prestige was secure, her financial difficulties were taken care of, and she herself would have the desired opportunity for a needed rest. She would have

her books; she would have the society of Matilda (for Matilda had in the long years grown to be more than a mere servant—she was a companion, a confidante); her creature comforts would be well seen to by Matilda; she would have the whole house to roam over at her will during the day; and every night she would have the pleasant relaxation of a drive behind the peerless John. It seemed to her, as she looked forward to it, the most desirable of vacations.

She had a light luncheon, for it was her custom to eat but little at midday, and spent the afternoon with a comfortable sense of improvement over one of John Fiske's volumes of Colonial history; popular novels she abhorred as frivolities beneath her. Toward five o'clock she took a stroll about the great silent, darkened house, and sat for a while in her drawing room fingering soft melodies out of her Steinway grand.

It was all very restful, but it began to grow somewhat tedious, and she was distinctly relieved when Matilda announced that her dinner was ready. To a mortal of a less exalted sphere the repast would have seemed a banquet. For Mrs. De Peyster, though an ascetic at noon, was something of an epicure at night; she liked a comfortable quantity, and that of many varieties, and these of the best. Under the skillful ministrations of Matilda she pleasurably disposed of clear soup, whitebait, a pair of reed birds on toast with asparagus tips, an alligator pear salad, and was in the leisurely and delicious midst of her iced strawberries before she observed that her faithful attendant wore a somewhat troubled face.

"What is the matter, Matilda?" Mrs. De Peyster inquired.

"Oh, nothing ma'am, nothing at all," said Matilda hastily.

But denial did not decrease Matilda's troubled air. Mrs. De Peyster pressed her, and at length Matilda unburdened herself. It really wasn't much at all, she said, but the fact was that—that both the butcher and grocer, when she had given her order, had—well, had joked her about the great quantity and high quality that she was buying; they had

said she was certainly living high while her "missus" was away. "You see," concluded Matilda, "we have always traded with those same people. I've stayed here alone in the house now for ten summers, and they know I eat very little and care only for plain food. And—and John, he—happened to receive the orders, and he spoke about it, too."

Mrs. De Peyster had dropped her dessert spoon and was staring at her confederate. "I never thought about food!" she exclaimed in dismay.

"Nor did I, ma'am, till the butcher—"

"It does look suspicious," interrupted Mrs. De Peyster.

"I think it does, ma'am."

"If you keep on having so much food sent in—"

"And of such high quality, ma'am."

"Someone may suspect—become curious—and might find out—might find out—"

"That's what I was thinking of, ma'am."

Mrs. De Peyster had risen. "Matilda, we cannot run that risk."

"Perhaps—perhaps, ma'am, we'd better change our butcher and grocer."

"That would do no good, for the new ones would find out that there was supposed to be only a single person here. No, such ordering has got to be stopped."

"If you can stand it, I think it would be safer, ma'am. But what will you eat?"

There was a brief silence. Mrs. De Peyster's air grew almost tragic. "Matilda, do you realize that you and I have got to live for the summer, for the entire summer, upon the amount you have been accustomed to ordering for yourself?"

"It looks that way, ma'am."

The epicture in Mrs. De Peyster spoke out in a voice of even deeper poignancy. "Two persons—do you realize that, Matilda?—two adult persons will have to live for three months upon the rations of one person!"

"And what's worse," added Matilda, "as I told you, I don't eat much. I've usually had just a little tea and now and then a chop."

"A little tea and a chop!" Mrs. De

Peyster looked as though she were going to faint. "A little tea and a chop! . . . For three months! . . . Matilda!"

It was plain, however, that this way was the only safe way, and standing over the remnants of the last genuine meal she expected to taste till the summer's end, Mrs. De Peyster agreed to this enforced abstinence.

But tomorrow's pangs of hunger can be borne with considerable fortitude by tonight's distended stomach; and after her first dismay Mrs. De Peyster was inclined to accept the situation in a philosophic spirit. After all, worse things might possibly have happened. To this state of mind she was induced by the pleasant process of digestion that had set in; and her mind was further distracted from her predicament by the mild excitement of being dressed by Matilda in one of Matilda's sober gowns for her evening ride.

Matilda, the competent, skilled Matilda, was inexplicably incompetent at this function. So clumsy, so nervous was she that Mrs. De Peyster was moved to ask with a little irritation what was the matter. Matilda hastily assured her mistress that there was nothing—nothing at all—and buttoned a few more buttonholes over the wrong buttons. As she followed the fully garbed Mrs. De Peyster, now looking the most stately of stately housekeepers, down the stairway, her nervousness increased.

"I wish—I wish—" she began at the door.

"What *is* the matter with you, Matilda?" demanded Mrs. De Peyster severely.

"I—I rather wish you—you wouldn't go out, ma'am."

"You are afraid I may be recognized?"

"No, I wasn't thinking of that, ma'am. I—I—"

"What else is there to be afraid of?"

"Nothing, ma'am, nothing. But I wish—"

"I am going, Matilda; we will not discuss it," said Mrs. De Peyster peremptorily. "You are not yourself." Her voice grew more kind. "That is natural, for you were up most of last night getting Olivetta away. You must have had

very little sleep. I desire that you go to bed immediately."

"But, please, ma'am, I'd rather stay up and—"

"You will go to bed; I command it." Mrs. De Peyster knew what was best for her servants, and she was kind whether they liked it or not. "Remember, I expect to see nothing of you when I return."

Mrs. De Peyster opened the door, unlocked the door in the boarding and locked it behind her, and stepped into her carriage which had been ordered and was in waiting. "Up Fifth Avenue and into the Park, John," she said. At first, as she rolled through the fashionable emptiness of Madison Avenue and then northward through the bright shop district of Fifth Avenue, Mrs. De Peyster fluttered with an emotion that was both fearful and delightful. This was a daring thing that she was doing—the nearest to a real adventure that she had engaged in since her far gone girlhood. Suppose, just suppose, that someone should recognize her from the sidewalk! The thought sent a series of pricking shivers up and down her usually tranquil spine.

Just as that fear struck into her, she saw, a few doors ahead, a man come out of a residence hotel. He sighted the De Peyster carriage and paused. Mrs. De Peyster's heart stood still, for the man was her agent, Mr. Harvey. If he should try to stop her and speak to her! But he merely bowed, and the carriage rolled on past him.

Mrs. De Peyster's heart palpitated wildly for a block. Then she began to regain her courage. Mr. Harvey had of course thought her Matilda. A few blocks, and she had completely reassured herself. There was no danger of her discovery—none. Almost everyone she knew was out of town; she herself was known to be upon the high seas bound for Europe; Matilda's gown and veil were a most unsuspicious disguise; and John, her paragon of a John, so rigidly upright on the seat before her—John's statuesque, unapproachable figure diffused about her a sense of absolute security. She relaxed, sank back into the

upholstery of the carriage and began fully to enjoy the soft May night.

But a surprise was lying in wait for her as she came into a comparatively secluded drive of Central Park. In itself the surprise was the most trifling of events—so slight a matter as a person twisting his vertebrae some hundred degrees or more and silently smiling. But that person was John! For a moment she gasped with amazed indignation. To think of John daring to smile at her! But quickly she recognized that John of course supposed her to be Matilda, and that the smile was no more than the friendly courtesy that would naturally pass between two fellow servants. Her indignation subsided, but her wonderment remained. To think that John could smile—John, in whose thoroughly ironed dignity she had never before detected a wrinkle!

Just as she had recomposed herself, they rolled into another unpeopled stretch of the drive. Again John's vertebrae performed a semicircle and again John smiled.

"Fine night, Matilda," he remarked in a pleasant voice.

Mrs. De Peyster shrank back into the cushions. She had the presence of mind to nod her head, and John faced about. To put it temperately, the situation was becoming very embarrassing. Mrs. De Peyster now realized that she had been guilty of a lack of forethought. It had not occurred to her, in working out this plan of hers, that her frigidly proper John could entertain a friendliness toward anyone. What she should have done was to have given John a vacation and secured an entirely strange coachman for the summer who would have had no friendly sentiments to give play to.

But her desire was now all to escape from John's amiable attentions. "Take me home," she said presently, muffling her voice behind her hand and veil and removing from it its accustomed tone of authority.

Half an hour later, to her great relief, the carriage drew up before her house. She stepped quickly out. "Goodnight—thank you," she said in a smothered im-

itation of Matilda's voice, and hurried up her steps.

She had unlocked the door in the boarding and had stepped into the dark entry when she became aware that John had deserted his horses and was stepping in just behind her. As though it were a matter of long custom, John slipped an arm around her waist and imprinted a kiss upon her veil. Mrs. De Peyster let out a little gasping cry and struggled to free herself.

"Don't be scared, Matilda," John reassured her. "Nobody can see us in here." And he patted her on the shoulder with middle-aged affection.

Mrs. De Peyster, after her first outburst, realized that she dared not cry out or rebuff John—to do so would reveal her identity. And horrified as she was, she realized that there must have long existed between John and Matilda a carefully concealed affair of the heart.

"It's all right, dear," John again reassured her with his staid ardor. "It's mighty good to be with you like this, Matilda!" He heaved a love-laden sigh. "We've had it mighty hard, haven't we, with only being able to steal a minute with each other now and then—always afraid of Mrs. De Peyster. Just see how she treated that Mariel! And wouldn't she have done the same to us, if she'd found us out? To think, dear, that but for her attitude you and me might have been married and happy! I know you are devoted to her, and wouldn't leave her, and I know she's kind enough in her way, but I tell you, Matilda"—John's voice, so superbly without expression when on duty, was alive with conviction—"I tell you, Matilda, she's a regular female tyrant!"

There was a mighty surging within Mrs. De Peyster, a premonition of eruption, but she choked it down. John, launched upon the placid sea of his elderly affection, did not heed that his supposed inamorata was making no replies.

"She's a regular tyrant!" he repeated. "But now that she's away," he added in a tender tone, "and left just us two here, Matilda dear, we'll have a lot of nice little times together;" and urged by

his welling love he again embraced her and again pressed a lovely kiss upon Matilda's veil.

This was too much; the crater could be choked no longer; the eruption came. "Let me go!" she cried, struggling, and her right hand, striking wildly out, fell full upon John's sacred cheek.

He drew back amazed. "What's the matter?" he demanded.

Mrs. De Peyster searched frantically for the keyhole to the inner door.

"Matilda, I'm not the man to take that!" he declared irefully. "What do you mean?"

But Mrs. De Peyster, having found the keyhole, turned her key, opened the door and closed it quickly behind her. Gasping, shivering, she groped in the dusky hall until she found a chair. Into this she sank half fainting, and sat shaking with astoundment, with horror, with wrath. Wrath swiftly became the ruling emotion; it began to fulminate. She would discharge John! She would send him flying the very next morning, bag and baggage!

Then an appalling thought suddenly shot through her. She could not discharge John!

She could not discharge John because she was not there to discharge him! She was upon the Atlantic high-road, speeding for Europe, and would not be home for many a month. And during all those months, whenever she dared appear, she would be subject to John's lovely attention!

She sat stiff with the horror of this new development. But she had not yet had time to realize its full possibilities—for hardly a minute had passed since she had entered—when she heard a key slide into the lock of the front door and saw a vague figure enter the unlighted hall. She arose in added terror. Had that John come back to—

"Oh, there you are, Matilda," softly called a voice, and the figure came toward her.

Mrs. De Peyster's terror suddenly took a new turn. For the voice was the voice of her nephew.

Jack threw an arm about Mrs. De Peyster's shoulders. "Ho, ho! That's

the time I caught you, Matilda!" said he in teasing reproof. "H'm—I saw those tender little love passages between you and John!"

Mrs. De Peyster stood a pillar of ice.

"Better not let Aunt Caroline find it out," he advised. "If she got on to this— But I'll never tell on you, Matilda." He patted her shoulder assuringly. "So don't worry."

Mrs. De Peyster's lips opened. If her voice sounded unlike Matilda's voice, the difference was unconsciously attributed by Jack to agitation due to her discovery.

"How—how did you get here?" she asked.

"With an almighty lot of trouble!" grumbled he. "Came around the corner an hour ago just in time to see you drive off with John. I've got a key to the inside door, but none to the door in the boarding; and as I knew there was nobody in the house I could rouse up, there was nothing for it but to wait till you and John came back. So we've been hanging around ever since."

There was one word of Jack's explanation that caught Mrs. De Peyster's ear. "We?" she ejaculated. "We?" Then she noticed that another shadowy figure had entered. "Who—who's that?"

"Mary," was Jack's prompt and joyous answer.

"Mary! Not that—that Mary Jones!"

"She used to be. She's Mary Morgan now."

"You're not—not married!"

"Day before yesterday," he cried in exultation. He bent down close to Mrs. De Peyster's ear. "Don't let Mary know how aunt objected to her; I haven't told her, and she doesn't guess it. And, oh, Matilda," he bubbled out enthusiastically, "she's the kind of a little sport that will stick by a chap through anything, and she's clever and full of fun, and a regular little dear!"

He turned. "Come here, Mary," he called softly. "This is Matilda."

The next instant a slight figure threw its arms about Mrs. De Peyster, kissed her warmly and exclaimed in a low, clear voice: "I'm so glad to meet you at

last, Matilda! Jack has told me how good you have been to him ever since he was a baby. I know we shall be the very, very best of friends."

"And so—you're—you're married!" mumbled Mrs. De Peyster.

Jack was too excited by his happiness to have noticed Mrs. De Peyster's voice even had it been a dozen-fold more unlike Matilda's than it was. "Yes!" he cried. "And wouldn't it surprise auntie if she knew? Auntie, sailing so unsuspectingly along on the *Plutonia*!" He gave a chortle of delight. "But, oh, I say, Matilda," he cried suddenly, "you mustn't write her!"

Mrs. De Peyster did not answer.

"We don't want her to know yet," Jack insisted. Then he added jocosely: "If you tell, there's a thing I might tell her about you. About—u'm—about you and John. Want me to do that—eh? Better promise not to tell."

"I won't," whispered Mrs. De Peyster.

"It's a bargain, then. But there's something else that would surprise her, too. I'm going to work."

"But not at once," put in Mary Morgan, *née* Jones, in her soft contralto voice, that seemed to effervesce with mischief. "Tell Matilda what you're doing."

"I've already told you, Matilda, about my little experiment in the pick and shovel line. I decided that I didn't care for that profession. You know aunt left me enough to last me till she got back. Well, I've entered the school of mines at Columbia—am going to study straight through the summer—night and day till the money gives out. By that time I ought to be able to get a job that will support us. And then I'll study hard at nights till I become a real mining engineer."

"But we've got to live close. Oh, but we've got to live close!" exclaimed Mary joyously, as though living close were one of the chiefest pleasures of life.

"Yes, we've certainly got to live close!" emphasized Jack. "That's why we're here."

"Why you're here?" repeated Mrs. De Peyster in a low, dazed tone.

"Yes." Jack gave a gleeful, excited laugh. "I had an inspiration how to economize. Says I to Mary: 'Mary, since auntie is away, and this big house is empty except for Matilda, why pay rent?' So here we are, and we're going to live here all summer—on the q. t. of course." He slipped an arm about Mary and one about Mrs. De Peyster, and again laughed his gleeful, excited laugh. "Just you and Mary and me, and—oh, say, Matilda, won't it be a lark?"

V

AGAIN Jack's arm tightened about Mrs. De Peyster in his convulsive glee, and again he exclaimed: "Oh, Matilda, won't it be a lark?"

It was only the embrace of Jack's good left arm that kept Mrs. De Peyster from subsiding to a jellied heap upon her parqueted floor. It had ever been her pride, and a saying of her admirers, that she always rose equal to every emergency. But at the present moment she had not a thought, had not a single distinct sensation. She was wildly, weakly, terrifyingly dizzy—that was all; and her only self-control, if the paralysis of an organ may be called controlling it, was that she held her tongue.

Fortunately there was little necessity for her speaking. The bride and groom were too joyously loquacious to allow her much chance for words, and too bubbling over with their love and with the spirit of daring mischief to be observant of any strangeness in her demeanor that the darkness did not mask. As they chattered on, Mrs. De Peyster began to regain some slight steadiness—enough to consider spasmodically upon how she was to escape undiscovered from the pair, upon how she was to extricate herself from the predicament of the moment—for beyond that moment's danger she had not the power to think. She had decided that she must somehow get away from the couple at once: in the darkness slip unobserved into her sitting room; lock the door; remain there noiseless; she had decided so much, when suddenly her wits were sent spinning by a new fear.

Suppose the real Matilda had not gone to bed! Suppose her attention should be quickened by their voices! Suppose she should come walking down into the scene! With two Matildas simultaneously upon the stage—Mrs. De Peyster reached out and clutched the banister of the stairway with drowning hands.

The pair talked on to her, answering themselves—and she strained for the approaching footsteps of Matilda that would sound her doom. They would take the rooms above Mrs. De Peyster's suite, they said—they would give her, Matilda, no trouble at all—they would attend to their own housework, everything—and so on, and so on, with Mrs. De Peyster hearing nothing, but reaching aurally out for Matilda's damning tread. To forestall this exposure, she started weakly up the stairs, only to be halted by the slipping of Jack's arm again around her shoulder. The couple talked on in happy, mischievous excitement about their household arrangements, including the supposed Matilda in their fun, and Mrs. De Peyster, the prisoner of Jack's affectionate arm, stood gulping, as though her soul were trying to swallow itself, ready to sink through her floor at the faintest approach of her housekeeper's slippers.

But after a few moments Jack picked up two suitcases he had brought, and the gay couple pressed her up the stairway before them—nearer and nearer to Matilda. As she passed her own door, the impulse came upon her to dash into her suite; but she had sense enough remaining to know that that would never do. She marched on up to the next floor, on which were the rooms Jack had selected for his summer residence. Jack opened a door, entered and turned on a light.

"Come in for a minute, Matilda," he called out.

But Mrs. De Peyster hurried wildly on and started up the next flight.

Jack and Mary both stepped back into the hallway where they could see the shadowy form of Mrs. De Peyster going up the stairs. "Please come in, Matilda!" urged the voice of Mary. "Let's sit a while and get acquainted."

"Tomorrow. I'm—I'm very tired,"

returned Mrs. De Peyster in a stifled tone.

She had reached the head of the stairway, and before her was the door to Matilda's bedroom.

"Oh, come down!" insisted the voice of Jack. "Such a great old lark as this—why, we simply must talk it over!"

Jack's hearty invitation sounded to her ears loud enough to awaken the seven sleepers—let alone the single sleeper through the thin door at which she stood. She shivered with terror and did not answer.

"Well, I'll come up for you then!" shouted Jack, and started up the stairway.

She was driven to her last stand. She dared not enter Matilda's room, for the noise would certainly arouse Matilda. On the other hand, there were Jack's rapidly mounting steps. She was powerless to move. One moment more and all would be over.

"Don't, Jack dear," she heard the soft voice of Mary. "If Matilda's tired, let her go to bed."

There was a moment of debate between the couple. Beyond the door could be heard the profound breathing of Matilda. Mrs. De Peyster's heart ceased operation.

"Oh, I say, Matilda!" shouted Jack.

Mrs. De Peyster thought she heard Matilda turn uneasily in her bed.

"We're all going to have breakfast together tomorrow morning, Matilda. Remember that!"

Was that Matilda sitting up?

"Good night, Matilda!" called Mary.

"Good night!" shouted Jack.

Mrs. De Peyster continued her terrified non-existence. But no stir came from Matilda's room, and the next moment Mrs. De Peyster heard their door close upon Jack and Mary. She began to return to life by slow degrees. There was little danger now of Matilda's rousing, for from that elderly virgin's couch sounded an announcement that she was sleeping with great gusto—a sound that is a close cousin to the smacking of the lips over one's food—a sound that in the less delicate sex is coarsely termed a snore.

Mrs. De Peyster's one great idea, the sole basis for her existence, was to gain the temporary haven of her room; and after a few minutes she crept down the stairway—slowly—slowly—putting each foot down with the softness of a closing lip—pausing with straining ears on every step. Then she started past the door behind which the couple were laughing happily, creeping with the footsteps of a disembodied spirit, fearful every second lest the door might open. She got safely by. Then, more rapidly, yet still as noiseless as a shadow's shadow, she crept down the second flight of stairs—crept into her room—groped through her sitting room into her bedroom, and collapsed upon her bed.

For hours she lay there in the dark, motionless, hardly daring to breathe, shattered by the narrowness of her escape, and appalled by this new situation that had risen round her—too appalled even to consider what might be the situation's natural developments. Finally, for she was by habit a good sleeper and was very tired, she drifted off into a sleep; but that was small relief, for the nightmare galloped madly with her from terror unto terror.

Suddenly she sat bolt upright in her bed, staringly awake. "Good morning, Matilda!" cried a cheery voice without, and she heard firm steps descending the stairway.

"Why—why—if it isn't Mr. Jack!" stammered the voice of Matilda.

Mrs. De Peyster found herself trembling. What more likely than that Matilda, in her amazement, should reveal the house's secret?

But the duskiness, which had been imprisoned in the house by the heavy shutters, was a very obliging ally against such unsuspicion as her nephew's. "Of course it's Jack," said he. "Who else did you suppose it was? Hello! What's that you're carrying?"

"It's—ah—er—my breakfast," stammered Matilda.

My breakfast, thought Mrs. De Peyster.

"Your breakfast!" exclaimed Jack. "What are you doing with it here?"

"I was—I was—" Matilda was not a

competent liar. "I was—er—just taking it up—up—er—up to my room—to eat it there."

"You'll do nothing of the sort!" said Jack peremptorily. "Didn't I tell you last night that all of us were going to eat together? Right about face and carry that back to the dining room!"

"But—but—"

"Right about face! We'll go down together, for I hear Mary leaving the room now."

"Mary?" cried Matilda's startled voice. A dish crashed to the floor. "Mary?"

Mrs. De Peyster shivered. It was coming!

"Have you forgotten to put on your head this morning?" exclaimed Jack. "Yes, Mary—Mary—Mary—! Mary Morgan—Mrs. Jack Morgan—my wedded wife—whom it cost me three twenty-five to make my own. Understand? Wake up—wake up! It's tomorrow, and it's breakfast time!"

"Good morning, Matilda," Mrs. De Peyster heard the voice of last night call out, and heard light, quick steps come down the stairway.

"Good—good morning," said Matilda.

"Did you sleep well after the surprise we gave you?"

"Ye—yes."

"For it was a big surprise, wasn't it?" exclaimed the girlish voice, with an excited little laugh.

"Yes," said Matilda, for the first time speaking with no hesitancy.

"I say, Matilda," put in Jack, "you didn't get a look at Mary last night." Mrs. De Peyster heard the scratching of a match, followed by a brief pause. "Well, don't you think she'll do?"

"Now, Jack dear, don't be a fool!" protested Mary's voice.

"Mrs. Jack Morgan," said Jack with severity, "I'll have you know that your husband can't be a fool. Come now, Matilda, speak up! Don't you think she'll do?"

"I think she will, Mr. Jack."

"And don't you think when auntie sees her she'll say the same?"

"I'm sure—I'm sure I—" Matilda could get out no more.

"We'll test it some day," said Jack's gay voice. "For some day, Mary, with your arm in mine, tight, just like this—we'll walk up to auntie's door, just like this—and I'll knock boldly just like this"—the three sharp raps sent new shivers through Mrs. De Peyster—"and I'll call out: 'May I come in auntie? It's Jack, come to introduce his wife.'"

"Quick, let's go down to breakfast," urged Matilda.

"May I come in, auntie?" repeated Jack.

"Oh, but I shall be so afraid!" There was a shudder in Mary's laughing voice.

"You've never seen her, have you?" said Jack, dropping his role. "There's a bully painting of her by that Dubois—dandy fellow, Dubois—in auntie's sitting room. Come in and have a look at it."

For a second Mrs. De Peyster sat clutching herself in a new terror. Had she in her last night's consternation forgotten to lock the door?

She heard the knob turn, then heard Jack exclaim: "Locked! But I suppose you have a key, Matilda."

"I—I think Mrs. De Peyster has it," stammered Matilda. "But, your breakfast—"

"Yes, breakfast—and lots of it!" cried Jack. "Hungry? Why, Matilda, my appetite has the seating capacity of the Coliseum! Come on, Mary. This is Sunday—there's no school; what do you say, let's take today off for a honeymoon!"

"Oh, Jack, do act like a grown-up!" protested Mary. "Remember, you're a married man."

"That's so—I am. And, 'Oh, my love is like a red, red rose,'" he burst out in a not very melodic voice; and Mrs. De Peyster sat listening to Jack's dimming uproar as the three moved down into the lower parts of the house—her breakfast with them.

Faintly the chatter of the lovers ascended to her from below; and later she heard sounds of the honeymooners from every quarter of the house. Several times they went dancing and laughing

by her door. Once as they passed she heard Jack exclaim in high glee: "If auntie only knew!"

What a lark they were having!

VI

As the slow, menacing hours dragged by, Mrs. De Peyster, with partially composed faculties, considered her situation. Her first decision was that she must escape; she could not remain there, with Discovery living on the floor above her and skipping past her door every hour. She must fly the house—fly in the darkness of the coming night.

Then rose the question: Fly—where?

Yes, where was she to fly? Officially she had sailed the day before; all the world knew that. If she were to leave the house and seek some asylum for the summer, her knowledge that she was widely known assured her that she would be certain to be recognized. And with Mrs. De Peyster at the same time in Europe and America— Besides, the plan with Olivetta had been built upon her remaining in the house; to fly would disarrange that plan and most likely precipitate some horrible disaster.

She could not fly. Better dangers known than dangers she wot not of.

She must stay—no doubt of that. But under what conditions! She had found yesterday growing tedious, when she had had the entire house to roam in at her pleasure. Henceforward, for months—*for months*—she dared not leave her suite! Yesterday she had been dismayed at the prospect of living on half-rations, and servants' rations at that. Henceforward, for months—*for months*—she was not certain of any rations at all! Matilda had as yet not brought her any food, and plainly dared not approach her door with that bride and groom gallivanting about the house.

Mrs. De Peyster's stomach began to complain bitterly, for, as has been said, it was a pampered creature and had been long accustomed to being served sumptuously and with promptitude. But time dragged on and no Matilda. Toward midday, Mrs. De Peyster's appetite for-

got its reproaches, for suddenly the grand piano in the drawing-room directly beneath her started into action—at first with a few rapid and careless scales. That was Mary Jones undoubtedly. Then the player began Chopin's Ballade in G Minor. Mrs. De Peyster slowly began to listen, at first contemptuously, then with rebellious interest, then with complete absorption. That person below could certainly play the piano—brilliantly, feelingly, with the touch and insight of an artist. Mrs. De Peyster's soul rose and fell with the soul of the song, for she was a true lover of music, though it had been against the De Peyster dignity ever to give free expression to the emotions music stirred within her. When the piano, after its uprushing, almost human closing cry, fell sharply into silence she was for the moment that piano's vassal.

Then Jack's applause broke the enchantment. After all, it was only that Mary Jones. Mrs. De Peyster's heart grew as hard as Pharaoh's.

The piano raised its soft, sad voice in one of Chopin's nocturnal airs. Mrs. De Peyster was now too hostile and too much upon her guard to be again taken captive; and she sat stiffly in her bed, defying the charm of the music and picturing that Mary Jones as a cheap, made-up, calculating thing, who had fastened on to Jack for the money she thought some day he would have—till a faint, ever so faint, knocking at her sitting room brought back to her remembrance her own predicament and its terrors. For a moment she hesitated what to do; then she tiptoed—for months she would dare move only on breathless tiptoe—to the door of her sitting room and listened.

Again the faint knocking sounded. "Mrs. De Peyster, it's Matilda," whispered an agitated voice.

Mrs. De Peyster quickly unlocked and opened the door. Matilda slipped in and the door was softly closed upon her. She had the complexion of ashes.

"Do you know what's happened?" she breathed.

"Everything," said Mrs. De Peyster.

"This is the first time I've had a

chance to get away from them. Here's some food—just what I could grab in a second; I didn't dare take time to choose." Matilda held out a bundle wrapped in a newspaper. "And I brought you the Sunday *Record*. I must go, for they may leave that piano any minute."

Mrs. De Peyster seized Matilda's arm. Her last night's experience with John had several times recurred to her and threatened her most unpleasantly as to the future. What if John should learn who was the real Matilda to whom he had made love?

"Wait, Matilda," she commanded, calling up her dignity. "I desire to instruct you upon a certain matter."

"Yes, ma'am," whispered Matilda nervously, "but in a minute they—"

Mrs. De Peyster had the same fear as her housekeeper, so she spoke quickly. "I expressly instruct you to mention to no one, especially John, that it was I and not you who went out driving last night."

"I'll not, ma'am."

"You swear?"

"I swear, ma'am. Never!"

She started for the door again, but again Mrs. De Peyster caught her arm. "One other matter. Inform John that I—that you, I mean—that you do not care for any more evening rides."

Matilda promised, and a moment later she was out of the room, the door was locked, and Mrs. De Peyster was sitting in a chair with the bundle of provisions on her exquisitely lacquered tea table. In the newspaper was a small loaf of bread, a tin of salmon and a kitchen knife. That was all. Not even butter! And no coffee—she who liked coffee, strong, with plenty of cream, three times a day! But when was she ever again to know the taste of coffee?

Never before had she sat face to face with such an uninteresting menu. But she devoured it—opening the tin of salmon after great effort with the knife—devoured it every bit. Then she noticed the newspaper in which the provisions had been wrapped. The illustrated supplement was outermost. This she unfolded, and before her eyes stood a big-

lettered title, "Annual Exodus of Society Leaders;" and in the queenly place in the center of the page was her own portrait by M. Dubois. Her eyes wandered up to the original, which was fairly well illumined by the infiltrating light. What poise, what breeding, what calm, imperturbable dignity! Then her gaze came back to her becrumbed tea table, with the kitchen knife and the raggedly gaping can. She slipped rather limply down in her chair and covered her eyes.

Outside Mrs. De Peyster's suite the afternoon flew by with honeymoon rapidity; within, it lingered and clung on and seemed determined never to go, as is time's malevolent practice with those imprisoned. Evening drew on, and Mrs. De Peyster's appetite began to reassert itself. Darkness came; she dimly heard the merry sounds of those feasting in her dining room. The hours lagged by; her appetite grew importunate, even indignant. After a time she heard Jack and Mary go up to their room; and presently blank, desolate, hopeless silence possessed the house.

Would she ever, ever eat again?

In desperation she was thinking of going down and raiding the kitchen, when again there sounded a caustic rapping. She opened the door, and Matilda silently entered with another bundle. This she deposited on a table in the most obscure corner of the room, on which burned a shaded and very faint light. While Mrs. De Peyster made peace with her appetite—this bundle contained a larger and more palatable supply than did its predecessor—Matilda gave her whispered information as to the plans of the bride and groom. As they wished their presence in the house to remain a secret, and as they did not wish their marriage known as yet, and particularly did not wish their aunt to learn of it, it was Jack's intention to come and go as stealthily as possible, usually by the back way; and as for Mary, she was never going out at all, except occasionally at night for a walk with Jack. This imprisonment she would mind very little, for she wished to practise hard all summer to be ready for pos-

sible engagements in the fall. If any curious body should ever chance to remark upon the music within the house, Matilda was to answer that Mrs. De Peyster had bought a mechanical piano player and that she, Matilda, was using it a great deal to while away the tedious months. As for their food, Jack would smuggle that in of nights.

All this Matilda told with a great deal of suppressed agitation in her manner, which Mrs. De Peyster ascribed to the danger of their situation. But when the peremptory demands of her appetite had been complied with, Mrs. De Peyster observed that Matilda's agitation was something quite different from mere nervous fear. There were traces of recent crying in Matilda's face, and now and then she had difficulty in holding down a sob. Mrs. De Peyster pressed her as to what was the matter; Matilda chokingly replied that there was nothing. Mrs. De Peyster persisted, and soon Matilda was weeping openly.

"Oh, my heart's broke, ma'am!" she sobbed. "My heart's broke!"

"Your heart broken! How?"

"Before I can tell you, ma'am," cried the miserable Matilda, "I've got to make a confession. I've done—something awful! I've disobeyed you, ma'am! I've disobeyed and deceived you!"

"What, Matilda," said Mrs. De Peyster severely—"after the way I've trusted you for twenty years?"

"Yes, ma'am. But I couldn't help it, ma'am! There's feelings one can't—"

"But what have you done?"

"I've—I've fallen in love, ma'am. For over a year I've been the same as engaged to John."

"John!" cried Mrs. De Peyster, sinking back from her erect reproving posture.

"Yes, ma'am—to John. I'm sorry I disobeyed you, ma'am—very sorry; but I can't think about that now. For now," sobbed Matilda, "for now it's all off—and my heart is broke!"

"All off? Why?" breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"That's what I can't understand, ma'am," wailed Matilda. "It's all a mystery to me. I went out this after-

noon to tell John, as you ordered me, that I didn't care to go riding any more. He was as stiff and as polite and as mad as—oh, John was never like that to me before, ma'am! I asked him what was the matter. 'All right; if you want to break off, I'm willing,' he said in, oh, such a hard voice. 'But, John,' I said, beginning to cry, 'but, John, what have I ever done to you?' 'You know what you've done!' he said."

"Oh!" breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"I begged him to explain, but he just turned his back on me and walked away. And now, ma'am," wept Matilda, "I know he'll never explain—he's such a proud, obstinate, stiff-necked man. And I love him so, Mrs. De Peyster—I love him so! Oh, my heart is broke!"

Mrs. De Peyster gazed at her sobbing serving woman in chilled dismay. Less than two days had passed since she had officially sailed for Europe, and already what a tangle things were in! If so many complications could close about her in two days, then in three months—But mathematics failed her. She was for a moment impelled to explain to Matilda; but she quickly realized it would never, never do for her housekeeper to know that her coachman had made love to her and had—had even kissed her. Every drop of De Peyster blood revolted against such a degradation.

"I hope it will come out all right, Matilda," she said in a shaking voice.

"Oh, it never can!" Matilda had already started for the door. She paused, hesitant, with the knob in her hand. "But you, ma'am," she faltered, "can you ever forgive me for the way I deceived you?"

Mrs. De Peyster tried to look severe, yet relenting. "I'll try to overlook it, Matilda."

"Thank you, ma'am," snuffled Matilda, and very humbly she went out.

VII

SEVEN days, in which it seemed to Mrs. Peyster that time stood still and taunted her—each day exactly like the day before, a day of fear, of half-starva-

tion, of tiptoed, breathless routine—days in which she spoke not a word save a whisper or two at midnight at the food bearing visit of the sad-visaged Matilda—seven dull, diabolic days dragged by their interminable length of hours. Such days! Such awful, awful days! Two things alone made them endurable: the fear lest, if she tried to better herself, she would be found out by Jack and that Mary Jones; and the growing hope, since a week had passed without discovery, that she would somehow pull safely through the situation. Of course, months hence, when it was announced that Mrs. De Peyster (daily she prayed for Olivetta) was homeward bound, Jack and Mary would decamp and leave the way clear for the easy reassumption of her dignity.

In the meantime she was aware that these same days bore a very different aspect to Jack and Mary. Mary practised hard; Jack studied hard (he surprised her); but every bit of the day not occupied by work was packed tight with pleasure. One item of their gorgeous escapade made Mrs. De Peyster bridle. They had taken John into their secret, and three times late at night they had gone out driving in her carriage.

Since Mary's presence in the house was constantly evident—from her playing or her singing or her chatting and laughing with Jack—Mrs. De Peyster's weary mind dwelt often on her niece. Mary could certainly play the piano; that she could not dispute. And Mary, to be just to her, had an agreeable voice. But what did she look like? What kind of a person was she? Jack's *mésalliance* was unforgivable of course—but just how bad a *mésalliance* was it?

She grew curious conceiving this unseen, uninvited, most undesirable guest and niece of hers. And one midnight, when that mournful pirate Matilda had slipped in with her usual bundle of pilferings from the pantry, she gave her curiosity a little leeway—looking, of course, as if the subject were one of supreme indifference to her.

"I suppose, Matilda, that that girl who has entrapped Jack is quite impossible."

Matilda was not born to be one of the world's great fighters, however much she might love a cause in the secret chambers of her timid heart.

"I—I couldn't quite say that, ma'am," said she.

"Oh, I dare say she has some flimsy, showy graces, like the cheap finery one sees in the poorer shops," Mrs. De Peyster said with condescending majesty. "But," she added positively, "she cannot be a well bred person."

"As to the—the fine points of that, of course I could not judge, ma'am," said poor Matilda.

"She cannot be. She laughs too much. She runs too much. She has no dignity. I am sure she can have no presence."

"She's—ah—rather pleasant," put in Matilda faintly.

"She does that to keep on your good side; she is merely catering to you," commented Mrs. De Peyster severely.

Matilda was too much in awe of her mistress to dare dispute a point with her. "Perhaps; I don't know."

"I do not doubt that she has a bold, cheap, catchy, vulgar sort of good looks," admitted Mrs. De Peyster. "But I suppose she has not the least vestige of real refined beauty."

"I can't say whether she would suit you or not, ma'am."

"It is quite plain that Jack has thrown himself away," declared Mrs. De Peyster. "He has made his bed; let him lie upon it!" This Mrs. De Peyster said with positive finality and with her very stiffest De Peyster dignity. But she must have spoken metaphorically, for just then Jack was lying in sweetest slumber upon one of the best beds in America and in one of America's most exclusive mansions.

But her definite assertions as to just what sort of a miscreation Mary was did not allay Mrs. De Peyster's curiosity. That Mary person, who frequently passed within a few yards of her, whom she was constantly hearing all over the house—this wife that Jack had brought home, became an ever more tantalizing mystery to her. And the mystery teased her all the more because she realized she dared not gratify her curiosity.

She must live for months in the same house with this interloping person and never see her.

On the seventh day after the *Plutonia* had carried the official Mrs. De Peyster away to her social duties in Europe, Matilda knocked at Mrs. De Peyster's prison door in the afternoon. A daylight call was a piece of boldness that Matilda had not ventured upon since Mary and Jack had invaded and made the house their own; but her temerity Matilda quickly explained. A little while before Mary had told her that she had not seen the sun for a week—that she simply could not stand it any longer without a breath of outside air—and dangerous as it was, she was going to slip out for a good long walk.

To Mrs. De Peyster this going out of Mary appeared instantly as a thoughtful attention of Providence. She was weary of her jail; here was a God-sent opportunity for a brief parole. And ordering Matilda to give her suite a thorough cleaning, she stepped forth into the great wide liberty of her house.

She roamed about from one silent room to another, keenly relishing this so long denied freedom, which might not be hers again for weeks or months. She paced several times up and down the length of her two dusky drawing rooms, then seated herself at the piano and softly, very softly played the Ballade of Chopin in G Minor, the music of which was open upon the piano—not with the skill of Mary, to be sure, for such proficiency was not becoming in a lady.

Her engrossment in the music prevented her hearing a possible earlier warning. As it was, the first alarm she had was the closing of the front door. She sprang up, palpitant. Her impulse was to hurry from the room and up the stairway; but in the same instant she realized that whoever was entering would see her flying figure. So she swiftly slipped back into the darkest corner, which was at the front of the drawing room, and sank breathless into a chair—hoping that the entrant would go on up and leave an open road for her escape.

She heard the steps upon the first

flight of the stairway, heard them come down the hall. Crouching, she held her breath. Would they pass on and up?

They turned into the drawing room.

Mrs. De Peyster tried to withdraw herself into herself, tried to become a part of the deep shadow in which she sat. Fortunately—most fortunately—the person did not look her way. The person walked straight to the piano, unpinned her hat and tossed it thereon. "Oh!" she breathed. "Oh!" And she gave a nervous little laugh.

Though Mrs. De Peyster was in the shadow, the beams that came through the diamond panes in the shutters cast upon the figure at the piano a sort of subdued spotlight. Mrs. De Peyster, peering from her corner, saw that the person, whose back was toward her, was a slender little body, of—she had to admit it—of an admirable figure, with a light, airy grace, and was simply but most tastefully dressed. She hoped, and feared, that the face would be turned toward the light; but it was not, for after a moment the person sank down before the piano and began to play Chopin's Ballade.

And how she did play it! With a sort of fascination, Mrs. De Peyster sat watching the gracefully swaying body, the graceful, masterful, unflourishing movements of the hands. Slowly taken possession of by the music, Mrs. De Peyster had half forgotten where she was, when the little person rose from the piano—and looked her way.

All Mrs. De Peyster's vital functions ceased.

"What, have you been here all this time, Matilda?" exclaimed a clear, soft contralto. "I didn't notice you; I guess my eyes were too blinded by the outside light."

While speaking, she had come forward. She drew a chair up facing Mrs. De Peyster and sat down.

"I didn't take much of a walk after all," she said with a shivery little laugh. "When I got out a little way I lost my nerve—lost it completely—and I turned and hurried back."

Mrs. De Peyster strained even more to become a part of the shadow.

"But I wasn't in too great a hurry to get you an evening paper, as you asked," she continued. "The *Plutonia* landed all safe today. But auntie—I wonder what she'd say if she heard me call her that?—but auntie had a most terrible trip. There's a lot about it on the society page. She was seasick all the way over—so sick that she was unable to see a single one of her friends. That was too bad, wasn't it?" There was a great deal of genuine feeling in the voice of the small person.

Mrs. De Peyster remained silent.

"Why, you don't seem at all sympathetic, Matilda!"

Mrs. De Peyster put a hand to her lips. "I'm—I'm very sorry, ma'am," she mumbled between her fingers, trying to assume Matilda's humility.

"Why, what's the matter with your voice? It seems husky."

"It's just"—Mrs. De Peyster swallowed—"just a little summer cold I caught today. It's—it's nothing, ma'am."

"I'm sorry," exclaimed the little person. "But, Matilda, how many more times have I got to tell you I don't like your 'ma'aming' me? Call me Mary."

"Very well—Mary."

"That's right. And now, as to auntie; the paper says she was so ill that she had not recovered sufficiently to leave the *Plutonia* until everyone else had landed. Society seems very much concerned over her condition."

On the whole, Mrs. De Peyster's concern over her condition was rather more acute than society's. But she had begun to recover in a degree, and was now, though palpitant within, making a furtive study of Mary. Such light as there was fell full upon that small person. Mrs. De Peyster saw a dark, piquant face, with features not regular, but ever in motion and quick with expression—eyes of a deep, deep brown, with a glimmer of red in them, eyes that gave out an ever changing sparkle of sympathy and mischief and intelligence—and a mass of soft dark hair, most unstylishly, most charmingly arranged, that caught some of the infiltrating light and softly glowed with a reddish tone. If there was any-

thing vulgar or commonplace, about Jack's wife, the beams from the little diamond panes were too kindly disposed to reveal it to Mrs. De Peyster's scrutiny.

Suddenly Mary laughed—softly—musically. "If auntie ever dreamed what Jack and I are doing here! Oh—oh! Some day, after she's forgiven us—if ever she does forgive us—You've said you're sure she'll forgive us, Matilda; do you honestly, truly, cross-your-heartily, believe she will?"

"Y-e-s," said Mrs. De Peyster's numb lips.

"I hope so, for Jack's sake!" sighed the little person. "After she forgives us I'm going to 'fess up everything. Of course she'll be scandalized—for what we're doing is simply awful—but all the same, I'll tell her. And after she's forgiven us I'll make her forgive you, too, Matilda, for your part in harboring us here. We'll see that you do not suffer."

Mrs. De Peyster realized that she should have expressed thanks at this point, but she considered silence better than valor.

"This paper prints that picture of her by M. Dubois again. Really, Matilda, is she as terribly dignified as that makes her look?"

Mrs. De Peyster had to speak. "I—I—hardly, ma'am."

"There you go with that 'ma'am' again! Say 'Mary'!"

"Hardly, Mary," mumbled Mrs. De Peyster.

"Because, if she looks anything like that picture, it must be simply awful to live with her. Did she ever bend her back?"

Silence.

"Or smile?"

Silence.

"Or forget that she was a De Peyster?"

Silence.

"The lady of that picture never did!" declared the little person with conviction. "She's just dignity and pride—calm, remote, lofty, iceberg pride. She can say her ancestors backward. Why, she's her family tree petrified!"

Mrs. De Peyster did not feel called upon to add to these remarks.

"I don't see how she can possibly like me!" cried the little person. "Do you, Matilda?"

"I suppose—you can—only wait—and see," replied Mrs. De Peyster.

"I haven't got any dignity or any money or any ancestors; only a father and a couple of grandfathers—though I dare say there were some Joneses before them. No, she'll never care for me—never!" wailed the little person. "She couldn't! Why, she's carved out of a solid block of dignity! She never did an un-De-Peyster thing in her life!"

Mrs. De Peyster felt herself choking. She had to get out of the room or die. "Would you—please—play that thing—again?" she asked.

"Certainly, Matilda"—with a note of surprise. "But always before you've told me you had no liking for music." She rose, then held up the paper with its portrait. "But you'll agree with me, Matilda, that Aunt Caroline certainly looks as if she were carved out of a solid block of dignity."

"Y-e-s," breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

Mary went back to the piano, and a moment later the strains of Chopin's Ballade were filling the room. Mrs. De Peyster waited till Mary was lost in the music, then she glided across the floor, past Mary's back, through the door, up the stairway and into her own room. She quickly explained to Matilda, then pressed that person forth—while the strains of the Ballade still mournfully ascended.

Mrs. De Peyster sank into a chair. There was a deal of emotion, of several varieties, at large within her bosom. But chiefest of them all, she thought she was very angry—very! That Mary person—she—she—

Well, to be just, one had to admit that she seemed to be fairly clever—and graceful—and to dress with unexceptionable taste—and good enough looking—In fact, to be strictly just, a beauty in miniature.

But she was a nobody! And for Jack to bring such a wife into the De Peyster

family— She would never forgive them! Never!

Never! Never! Never!

VIII

THAT midnight Matilda stole in to Mrs. De Peyster with a face that would have been an apt cover for the Book of Lamentations. She opened her pages. She had just had a telegram that her only sister, who lived in a village near Albany, was seriously ill. She was sorry, but she felt that she must go.

"Of course you must go, Matilda," exclaimed Mrs. De Peyster. Then the significance to her of Matilda's absence flashed upon her. "But what shall I do without any company at all?" she cried. "And without any food?"

"I've seen to the food, ma'am." And Matilda explained that for the last two hours, in preparation for her leaving, she had been smuggling into the house from Third Avenue delicatessen stores boxes of crackers, cold meats, all varieties of canned goods—"enough to last you for a month, ma'am, and by that time I'll be back." Her explanation made, she proceeded, very quietly, to carry the provisions up and stack them in one corner of Mrs. De Peyster's large, white-tiled bathroom. When the freightage was over, the bathroom, with its supply of crackers and *zwieback*, its bottles of olives and pickles, its cold tongue, cold roast beef, cold chicken, its cans of salmon, sardines, deviled ham, California peaches and condensed milk—the bathroom was itself a delicatessen shop that many an ambitious young German would have regarded as a fine start in life.

Matilda broke down at the last moment. "If it wasn't for you, ma'am, I wouldn't care if it was me that was sick instead of my sister, and if I never got well. For with John—" She could say no more, and departed adrip with tears.

Matilda's nightly visits were missed, but Mrs. De Peyster had come to take her situation more and more philosophically. The life was unspeakably tedious, to be sure, and rather dangerous, too;

but she had accepted the predicament—it had to be endured and could not be helped; and such a state of mind made her circumstances much easier to support. She would not again venture from her suite and run the risk of another, and perhaps less fortunate, encounter with Mary or with Jack; she would carefully continue to be as light and noiseless in her movements as the shadow of a ghost; and, all in all, there was no reason—though of course it was most uncomfortable—there was no good reason why she might not safely withstand the siege and come out of the affair with none but her two confidantes being the wiser.

In this philosophic mood three days passed—passed slowly and tediously to be sure, but yet they did get by. There were relaxations, of course—things to occupy her mind. She read a little each day; she listened to Mary's concert in the drawing-room below her; she listened for snatches of the jolly conversation early in the morning and at night when Jack was at home; at times she stood upon a chair at one of her windows and cautiously peered through the little panes in her shutters across at the blind houses opposite and down into the empty avenue. Then, of course, her meals were a diversion; she became quite expert with the can opener and the corkscrew. The empty cans, since there was no way to get them out of her suite, she stacked on the side of the bathroom opposite her provisions; and daily the stack grew higher.

The nearest approach to an incident during this vacant period came to pass on the third night after Matilda's departure. On that evening Mrs. De Peyster became aware of a new voice in the house—a voice with a French accent. It seemed familiar, yet for a time she was puzzled as to the identity of the voice's owner. Then suddenly she knew; the man below was M. Dubois, whom Olivetta, at her desire, had with unwilling but obedient frostiness sent about his business. She had known that Jack had taken up with M. Dubois at the time the artist was doing her portrait; but she had not known that Jack was so

intimate as the artist's being admitted to Jack's secret seemed to indicate.

On the fifth day after Matilda's departure, and the twelfth after the sailing of the *Plutonia*, Mrs. De Peyster observed a sudden change in the atmosphere of the house. Within an hour, from being filled with honeymoon hilarity, the house became filled with gloom. There was no more laughter—no more running up and down the stairs and through the hallways—the piano's song was silent. Mrs. De Peyster sought to gain some clue to this mysterious change by listening for the talk of Mary and Jack as they passed her door. But whereas the pair had heretofore spoken freely and in exuberant tones, they now were either wordless or their voices were solemnly hushed.

What did it mean? Days passed; the solemn gloom continued unabated; and this question grew an ever more puzzling mystery to Mrs. De Peyster. What could it possibly, *possibly*, mean?

But there was no way in which she could find out. Her only source of information was Matilda, and Matilda was gone for a month; and even if Matilda by any chance should know what was the matter, she would not dare write; and even if she wrote, the letter of course would never be delivered, but would probably be sent after the pretended Mrs. De Peyster to Europe. Mrs. De Peyster could only wonder—and read—and gaze furtively out of the little windows of her prison—and eat—and stack the empty cans yet higher in her bathroom—and wait, impatiently wait, while the mystery grew daily and hourly in magnitude.

Among the details that added to the mystery's bulk was the sound of another new but familiar voice—the voice of Marie, her discharged maid. And Marie's voice was not heard for an hour, and then heard no more—but was heard day after day, and her body was also heard, bustling about as if at work. And another detail was that John no longer kept to his stable but seemed now constantly busy within the house. And another detail was that she became aware that Jack and Mary no longer tried to keep their presence in the house a secret,

but went openly forth into the streets together. And another detail was that she one day heard Jack in consultation with a gentleman in the drawing room; the matter of their talk she could not gather, but the voice of the second person was the voice of her man of business, Mr. Harvey.

But the most bewildering, and yet most clarifying, detail she observed on the eleventh day after Matilda's going, the eighteenth of her own official absence. On that afternoon she was standing on a chair entertaining herself by gazing through one of her shutters, when she saw Jack come around the opposite corner. He was walking very soberly, and about the left sleeve of a quiet gray summer suit was a band of crape.

Mrs. De Peyster stepped down from her chair. The mystery was lifting. Somebody was dead! But who? Who?

Early the next morning, while the inmates of the house were occupied in the serving or the eating of breakfast, Mrs. De Peyster was startled by a soft knocking at her door, but was instantly reassured by the tremulous accents without.

"It's me, ma'am—Matilda. Let me in—quick!"

The next instant the door opened and Matilda half staggered, half fell, into the room. But what a Matilda! Shivering all over, ashen of face, eyes wildly staring.

"What is it?" cried Mrs. De Peyster, seizing her housekeeper's arm.

"Oh, ma—ma—ma'am," chattered Matilda. "It's—it's awful!"

"But what is it?" demanded Mrs. De Peyster, beginning to tremble with an unknown terror.

"Oh, it's—it's awful! I couldn't get you word before—for I didn't dare write, and my sister wasn't well enough for me to leave her till last night."

Mrs. De Peyster shook the shaking Matilda. "Will you please tell me what's happened?"

"Yes, ma—ma'am. Here's a copy of the first paper that had anything about it. The paper's over a week old. I brought it along to—to break the thing to you gently."

Mrs. De Peyster seized the newspaper.

In the center of its first page was a reproduction of M. Dubois's painting of herself, and across the paper's top ran the giant headlines:

MRS. DE PEYSTER FOUND DEAD IN THE SEINE

Face Disfigured by Water, but Friends in Paris
Identify Social Leader by Clothes
upon the Body

Mrs. De Peyster sank without a word into a chair, and her face duplicated the ashen hue of Matilda's.

Matilda likewise collapsed into a chair. "Oh, isn't it awful, ma'am!" she moaned.

"So—so it's I—that's dead!" gasped Mrs. De Peyster.

"Yes, ma'am. But that isn't all. I—I thought I'd break it to you gently. That was over a week ago. Since then—"

"You mean," said the marble lips of Mrs. De Peyster, "that there's something more?"

"Yes, ma'am. Oh, the papers have been full of it. It's been a tremendous sensation!"

"Oh!" gasped Mrs. De Peyster.

"And Mr. Jack, since you died without a will, is your chief heir. And, since he is now the head of the De Peyster family, the first thing he did on hearing the news was to arrange by cable to have your body sent here."

Mrs. De Peyster, as though galvanized, half rose from her chair. "You mean—the body—is coming here?"

"I said I was trying to break it to you gently," moaned Matilda. "It's—it's already here! The ship that brought it is now docking. Your funeral—"

"My funeral!"

"It takes place in the drawing-room this morning. Oh, isn't it awful! But perhaps, ma'am, if you could see what beautiful flowers your friends have sent—"

But Mrs. De Peyster had very softly sunk back into her chair.

IX

As soon as that huddled mass of womanhood that was Mrs. De Peyster had become sufficiently reanimated to be

able to think, its first thought came in the form of an unuttered wail.

She was dead! She was to be buried! She could never come home again!

Or if she did come home, what a scandal! A scandal worse ten times than the grave itself!

With loose face and glazed eyes she stared at Matilda while the latter stammered out disjointed details of the past week's happenings. As for Mr. Jack's lark in dwelling surreptitiously with his wife in his aunt's house, not a breath of that had reached the public. He had very blandly and coolly told the reporters that he had been quietly married a fortnight before, that he and his wife had been living in seclusion, and that on learning of his aunt's demise they had come to her house to direct the obsequies. . . . Those Paris police were trying to solve the mystery of what had become of Mrs. De Peyster's trunks. . . . If Mrs. De Peyster could only see the beautiful floral tributes that were arriving—

But Mrs. De Peyster heard none of this. She was dead! She was to be buried! She could never come home again!

At length her lips moved—slowly, stiffly, as might the lips of a dead person. "What are we going to do?"

"I've been saying that same question to myself for days, ma'am," quavered Matilda. "And I—I don't see any answer."

No, there was nothing she could do. Mrs. De Peyster continued her glazed stare at her faithful serving woman. In the first few minutes her mind had been able to take in the significance only to herself of this culminating disaster; but now its significance to another person shivered through her being.

Poor—poor Olivetta!

For Olivetta of course it was. Mrs. De Peyster knew what was due the De Peyster corpuscles that made their stately circuit through her veins, and was not neglectful to see that that due was properly observed, but the heart from which those corpuscles derived their impulse was in its way a very kind heart. And now, for a few minutes, her heart was acutely wrung for Olivetta.

But for a few minutes only. Then Olivetta and all concerns beyond the immediate moment were suddenly forgotten. For in the hall without soft footsteps were heard, and a moment after upon her door there sounded an ominous scratching—a sound like the search of a key in an agitated hand for its appointed hole.

Mrs. De Peyster rose up and clutched Matilda's arm and stood in rigid terror.

"Tha—that key?" chattered Matilda. "Can—can it fit?"

"There were only two keys," breathed Mrs. De Peyster—"mine here and the one I gave to Olivetta."

"Then it can't fit, since Miss Olivetta's—"

But the key gave Matilda the lie direct by slipping into the lock. The two women clung to one another, knowing that the end had come, wondering who was to be their exposer. The bolt clicked back; the door swung open, and—

And into the dusky room there tottered a rather tall, heavily veiled feminine figure. It did not gaze at the shrinking couple in astonishment; it did not launch into exclamation at its discovery. Instead it sank weakly down into the nearest chair.

"Oh!" it moaned. "Oh! Oh! Oh!"

"Who—who are you?" huskily demanded Mrs. De Peyster.

"Oh! Oh!" moaned the figure. "Isn't it terrible! Isn't it terrible! But I didn't mean to do it—I didn't mean to do it, Caroline!"

"It's not—not Olivetta?" gasped Mrs. De Peyster.

"It was an accident!" the figure wailed on. "I couldn't help myself. And if you knew what I've gone through to get here, I know you'd forgive me."

Mrs. De Peyster had lifted the veil up over the hat. "Olivetta! Then—after all—you're not dead?"

"No. If I only were!" sobbed Olivetta.

"Then who is that—that person who's coming here this morning?"

"I don't know!" Then Olivetta's quavering voice grew hard with indignation. "It's somebody who's trying to get a good funeral under false pretenses!"

"But the papers said the body had on my clothes."

"Yes—I suppose it must have had."

"But how—" Mrs. De Peyster recalled their precarious position. "Matilda, lock the door. But, Olivetta, how could it ever, ever have happened?"

"I followed your directions—and got to Paris all right—and everything was going splendid—and I was beginning to enjoy myself—when—when—oh, Caroline, I—I—"

"You what?" demanded Mrs. De Peyster.

"I lost my purse!" sobbed Olivetta.

"Lost your purse?"

"I left it in a cab when I went to the Louvre. And in it was all my money—my letter of credit—everything!"

"Olivetta!"

"And I didn't dare to cable you for more. For if I had sent a cable to you here it might have betrayed you."

"And what did you do?"

"There was nothing for me to do but to—to—sell some of your gowns."

"Oh!" Mrs. De Peyster was beginning dimly to see the drift of things.

Olivetta's mind wandered to another phase of her troubles. "And the price I got for them was a swindle, Caroline. It was—it was a tragedy! For your black chiffon, and your silver satin, and your spangled net—"

"But this person they took for me?" interrupted Mrs. De Peyster.

"Oh, whoever she is, she must have bought one of them. She could have bought it for nothing—and that Frenchman who cheated me—would have doubled his money. And after she bought it—she—she"—Olivetta's voice rang out with hysterical resentment—"she got us all into this trouble by walking into the Seine. It's the most popular pastime in Paris, to walk into the Seine. But why," ended Olivetta with a spiteful burst—"why couldn't she have amused herself in her own clothes, that's what I want to know!"

"And then? What did you do?" breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"When it came out three days later that it was you, I was so—so frightened that I didn't know what to do. I didn't

dare deny the report, for that would have been to betray you. And I didn't dare cable to you that it was all a mistake and that I was all right, for that would have been just as bad. Perhaps I might have acted differently, but I—well, I ran away. I crossed to London with your trunks. There I learned that—that they were sending your remains home. I realized I had to get you word some way, and I realized the only way was for me to come and tell you. So I sold some more of your gowns and just caught the *Mauretania*, and here I am."

So ending, Olivetta, as though her bones had melted, subsided into a gelatinous heap of dejection, dabbing her crimson eyes with a handkerchief already saturated with liquid woe.

"It's a relief to know it wasn't you," said Mrs. De Peyster.

"I'm sure—it's kind of you—to say so," snuffled Olivetta gratefully.

"But, aside from your being safe, our situation is unchanged," said Mrs. De Peyster in a tremulous, awe-stricken tone. "For that—that person is coming here just the same."

"I know. The horrid thing!"

"She may be here any minute," said Mrs. De Peyster. "What are we going to do?"

"We must think of something quick," spoke up Matilda nervously. "For it's almost time for your funeral, ma'am; and after that—"

"I've been thinking all the voyage over," broke in Olivetta. "And I could think of only one plan."

"And that?" Mrs. De Peyster eagerly inquired.

There was an excited, desperate light in Olivetta's flooding eyes. "Couldn't you manage in some way, while nobody is looking, to slip into that Frenchwoman's place? And then, before the ceremony was over you could sit up and say you'd been in a cataleptic fit. Such things have happened. I've read about them."

"Absurd, Olivetta! Quite absurd!" quavered Mrs. De Peyster.

"I dare say it is," agreed Olivetta, subsiding again into her limp misery.

"Oh, why did I ever go to Paris? I hate the place!"

"Don't give way; think!" commanded Mrs. De Peyster, who was in a condition not far removed from Olivetta's. "Think, Matilda!"

"Yes, ma'am," said Matilda obediently.

"You think, Caroline," whimpered Olivetta. "You always had such a superior intellect, and were always so equal to every emergency."

Mrs. De Peyster, thus reminded of what was expected of her lifelong leadership, tried to collect her scattered forces, and sat with pale, drawn, twitching face, staring at her predicament—and her two faithful subjects sat staring at her, waiting the inspired idea for escape that would fall from her never failing lips. Moment after moment of deepest silence followed.

At length Mrs. De Peyster spoke. "There are only two ways. First, for me to go down and disclose myself—"

"But the scandal! The humiliation!" cried Olivetta.

"Yes; that first way will never do," said Mrs. De Peyster. "The second way is not a solution; it is only a means to a possible solution. But before I state the way, I must ask you, Olivetta, if anyone saw you come in."

"There were a number of people coming and going, people preparing for the funeral—but I watched my chance and used my latchkey, and I'm sure no one connected with the house saw me."

"That is good. If any outsiders saw you they will merely believe that you also were some person concerned in the funeral. As for my plan, it is simple. You must both slip out of here unseen; you, Olivetta, will of course say that you have returned to the city to attend my funeral. From the outside you both must help me."

"Yes. But you, Caroline?" said Olivetta.

"As for me, I must stay here quietly, just as I have done for the last three weeks. I still have some supplies left. After everything has quieted down, I shall watch my chance and steal out of the house late some night. That's as far

as I have planned; but once away, I can work out some explanation for the terrible mistake and then come home. That seems the only way; that seems the only chance."

"You always were a wonder!" cried Olivetta admiringly.

"Then you agree to the plan?"

"Of course!"

"And you, Matilda?"

"Of course, ma'am."

Thus praised and seconded, Mrs. De Peyster resumed some faint shadow of her accustomed dignity. "Very well, then. You must both leave here this instant."

Olivetta threw her arms about her cousin's neck. "Good-bye, Caroline," she quavered. "You really have no hard feelings against me?"

"No, no. You must go!" said Mrs. De Peyster.

"I'm sure, with you in charge, it's all going to come out right!" said the clinging Olivetta hopefully.

"You must really go!" And Mrs. De Peyster pressed her and Matilda toward the door.

But midway to the door the trio halted suddenly. Coming up the stairway were a pair of feet. The footsteps came through the hall. The trio did not breathe. The footsteps paused before the sitting room door. The confederates gripped each other's arms.

"Are you sure you saw that person come in here?" they heard a voice ask—Jack's voice.

"I'm certain." The voice that answered was Mary's.

"I'll bet it was a sneak thief," said Jack. "To slip into a house at a funeral or a wedding, when a lot of people are coming and going—that's one of their oldest tricks." He turned the knob, and finding the door locked, shook it violently. "Open up in there!" he called.

The three clung to one another for support.

"Better open up!" called Jack. "For I know you're in there!"

Breathless, the trembling conspirators clung yet more desperately.

"But how could she get in?" queried

the excited voice of Mary. "Your aunt locked the door before she went away."

"Skeleton key," was Jack's brief explanation. "Mary, I'll watch the door to see she doesn't get out. You go and telephone for a locksmith and the police."

"It's—it's all over!" breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"Oh! Oh! What shall we ever do?" wailed Olivetta, collapsing into a chair.

"The police—she mustn't go!" gasped Mrs. De Peyster. "Open the door, Matilda, quick!" Then in a weak, quivering voice she called to her besiegers:

"Wait!"

After which she wilted away into the nearest chair—which chanced to be directly beneath the awesome, unbending, blue-blue-blooded Mrs. De Peyster of the golden frame, whose proud composure it was beyond things mortal to disturb.

X

MATILDA'S shaking hand unlocked the door. Jack lunged in, behind him Mary. On his face was a look of menacing justice. But at sight of the trembling turnkey, his stern jaw relaxed and almost dropped from its sockets.

"Matilda!" he exclaimed. And from behind him, like an echo, sounded Mary's "Matilda!"

"Good—good morning, Mr. Jack," quavered Matilda, locking the door again.

Then Jack sighted Olivetta. "What, you, Olivetta?"

"Yes, it's I, Jack," she said with a hysterical laugh. "I just thought I'd call in to express—it's no more than is proper, my being her cousin, you know—to express my sympathy to your aunt."

"Your sympathy to my aunt?"

"Yes. To—to tell her how—how sorry I am that she's dead," explained Olivetta.

A little hand gripped Jack's arm. "Jack!" He turned his head and his eyes followed Mary's pointing finger.

"Aunt Caroline!" He walked amaz-

edly up before her palsied figure. "Aunt Caroline!"

"Ye—yes, Jack," she quavered.

"Then you're not dead?"

"N—no," she quavered.

Jack and Mary stared down at her in uttermost astonishment. "But—but—I don't understand!" he ejaculated. "How do you come here?"

Mrs. De Peyster made a last rally to save herself. "My explanation—that is, all I know about this affair—is really very simple," she said, striving to revivify her dignity. "I—you see—I very unexpectedly returned home—and—and discovered this—this situation. That is all." She gathered a little more courage. "I do not need to inform you that I have been away."

"Of course I know you've been away," said Jack. "But that Mrs. De Peyster at the pier—who is she?"

"She's nothing—but a base—impostor!" cried Olivetta indignantly, lifting her face for a moment from her woe-soaked handkerchief. "Don't you believe a word she says!"

"But we're all ready for the ceremony!" exclaimed Jack. "There are a dozen reporters downstairs, and no end of friends are coming from out of town to be present. And that person, whoever she is, will be here—"

"I tell you she's an impostor!" cried Olivetta frantically. "Don't let her in, Jack!"

Jack stared bewildered at his aunt an instant longer, then sprang to the telephone upon Mrs. De Peyster's writing desk and called for a number. "Is this the French Line? . . . Connect me with the superintendent of the pier. . . . This the superintendent? . . . This is Mr. Morgan, nephew of Mrs. De Peyster. Hold Mrs. De Peyster at the dock. Or stop her at all costs if she has left. Understand? There must be no mistake! Further orders will follow. Good-bye."

He turned about to see that his aunt had sunk back in her chair, her lips closed.

"She's fainted!" cried Mary. "Her smelling salts!"

"A glass of water!" exclaimed he.

"No, no," breathed Mrs. De Peyster weakly.

But the pair had darted away, Mary into the bedroom, Jack into the bathroom. From the bathroom came a sudden jangling din like the sheetiron thunder of the stage.

Mary reappeared, fresh amazement on her face. "Somebody's been using the bedroom! The bed's not made, and auntie's clothes are all about!"

The next moment Jack rushed in behind her. "What a stack of empty tin cans I kicked into in the bathroom! What the deuce has been going on here?"

Mrs. De Peyster looked weakly, hopelessly, at Olivetta. "There's no use trying to keep it up any longer. We—we might as well confess. You tell them, Olivetta."

But Olivetta protested into her dripping handkerchief that she never, never could; and so it fell to Mrs. De Peyster herself to be the historian of her plans and misadventures; and with every word she grew less and less like the Mrs. De Peyster of M. Dubois's masterpiece. At the close of the long narrative, made longer by frequent outbursts of misery, she could have posed for a masterpiece of humiliation.

"It's all been bad enough," she moaned—never before had Jack heard an undignified sound issue from those stately lips; "what's happened is all bad enough, but think what's yet to come! It's all coming out; everybody will be laughing at me! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

Mrs. De Peyster was drifting away into inarticulate lamentations, when there came a tramping sound upon the stairway. She sat sharply upright. "What's that?"

There was a loud rap upon the door. "I say, Mr. Morgan," called out a voice, "what's all this delay about?"

"Who is it?" breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"Billy McGuire, of the *Sun*, and the whole gang of reporters," breathed her nephew.

"Oh, Jack! Save me! Save me!"

"The hour set for the funeral is passed," continued McGuire; "the drawing-room is packed with people and the

body hasn't arrived yet. We don't want to make ourselves obnoxious, but it's almost press time for the next edition and we've simply got to know what's doing. You know what a big story this is."

"Wait a minute, fellows," Jack called. "I'll explain everything."

"Oh, don't, Jack, don't!" moaned his aunt. "Send them away! Put it off! I can't stand it!"

But Jack, without heeding her protest, stepped to Olivetta's side. "Olivetta," he whispered rapidly, "did you obey Aunt Caroline's instructions on your trip home? About keeping to your stateroom—about keeping yourself veiled, and all the rest?"

"Yes," said Olivetta.

"And aunt's trunks, where are they?"

"At the Cunard pier."

"What name did you sail under?"

"Miss Harriman."

In the instant, with none too tender hands, Jack jerked the pins from Olivetta's traveling hat, crossed and thrust the hat down upon his aunt's head, pushed in the pins and drew the veil down over her face.

"Matilda, not a word!" he ordered in a quick authoritative whisper. "Olivetta, not a word! Aunt Caroline, call up your nerve; you'll need it, for that Billy McGuire is the cleverest reporter in Park Row. And now, Mary, let them in."

Mrs. De Peyster half rose in her consternation. "Oh, Jack—you're not going to let them in!" she gasped.

"We don't dare keep them out. Open the door, Mary." He pressed Mrs. De Peyster firmly back into her chair. "Keep your nerve!" he commanded sharply.

The next moment a dozen reporters crowded into the room, and behind them could be seen the pale, curious faces of John, Marie and M. Dubois. Mrs. De Peyster, Olivetta and Matilda sat in frozen terror; Mary gazed wonderingly at her husband; and as for Jack, he stood before his aunt, obscuring her, looking very serious, very shaken, yet very composed.

"What's up?" demanded McGuire.

"Something that I think will surprise you," said Jack gravely; "something that has completely astounded me, and also this lady, who is Mrs. De Peyster's housekeeper, and Miss Harmon here, who has just returned from a quiet summer in Maine to attend her cousin's funeral. The fact is, gentlemen, to come right to the point, there is to be no funeral."

"No funeral!" cried McGuire.

"No funeral!" ran through the crowd.

"No funeral," reiterated Jack. "The reason, gentlemen, is that a great mistake has been made. Mrs. De Peyster is not dead."

"Not dead!" exclaimed the reporters.

"If you desire proof, here it is." And Jack, stepping aside, revealed the figure of his aunt. He put his right hand upon her shoulder, gripping it tightly and holding her in her chair, and with his left he lifted the thick veil above her face. "I believe that most of you know Mrs. De Peyster, at least from her pictures."

"Mrs. De Peyster!" cried the astounded crowd. "Mrs. De Peyster herself!"

"Mrs. De Peyster herself," repeated Jack in his grave voice. "You are surprised, but not more so than myself."

"But that other Mrs. De Peyster—the one the funeral is for?" asked McGuire. "Who is she?"

"That, gentlemen, is as great a mystery to us as to any of you," said Jack.

"But how the—but how did it all happen?" ejaculated McGuire.

"That is what I am going to tell you," said Jack.

Mrs. De Peyster struggled up. "Don't, Jack—don't!" she besought him wildly.

Jack pressed her back into her chair and held her there with an arm that was like a brace of steel. "You see, gentlemen," he remarked sympathetically, "how this business has upset her."

"Yes. But the explanation?"

"Immediately—word for word, as my aunt has just now told me," said he.

"Oh!" moaned Mrs. De Peyster.

Olivetta and Matilda gazed at Jack with ghastly, loose-lipped faces. Jack kept his eyes for the most part upon the

shrewd, fraud penetrating features of McGuire—his own countenance the most truthful that son of Adam ever wore.

"What my aunt has said is really very simple. As you know, she left Paris about two weeks ago on a long motor trip. During her brief stay in Paris one of her trunks was either lost or stolen, she is not certain which. As she pays no personal attention to her baggage, she was not aware of her loss for several days. So much is fact. Now we come to mere conjecture. A plausible conjecture seems to be that the gowns in the trunk were sold to a secondhand dealer, and these gowns, being attractive, the dealer must have immediately resold to various purchasers, and one of these purchasers must have—"

"Yes, yes—plain as day!" exclaimed McGuire.

"The face was unrecognizable," continued Jack, "but since the gown was marked with Mrs. De Peyster's name, of course—"

"Of course! The most natural mistake in the world!" cried McGuire excitedly. "Go on! Go on!"

Mrs. De Peyster had slowly turned a dazed countenance upward and was gazing at the grave, plausible face of her nephew. "My aunt did not learn of what had happened till the day the supposed Mrs. De Peyster was started homeward. The most sensible thing for her to have done would have been to declare the mistake and saved us all a great deal of grief. But the shock had completely unbalanced her. I will not attempt to describe her psychological processes or justify her actions. You may call her course hysterical, illogical, what you like; I do not seek to defend it; I am only trying to give you the facts. She was so completely unnerved— But a mere look at my aunt will show you how the shock unnerved her."

The group gazed at Mrs. De Peyster's haggard face; a murmur of sympathy and understanding ran among them.

"In her hysterical condition," continued Jack, "she had but one thought, and that was to get home as quickly as she could. She crossed to England,

sailed on the *Mauretania* under an assumed name, kept to her stateroom and arrived here at the house heavily veiled half an hour ago. I may add the details that she sailed under the name of Miss Harriman and that her trunks are now at the Cunard pier. There you have the entire story, gentlemen." Jack looked down at his aunt. "I believe I have stated the matter just as you outlined it to me, Aunt Caroline?"

"Ye—yes," breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"There is no detail you would like to add, aunt?"

"None," breathed Mrs. De Peyster.

"Then, gentlemen," said Jack, turning to the reporters, "since you have all the facts, and since my aunt is bordering on a state of collapse, I would take it as a favor if—"

"No need to dismiss us," put in McGuire. "We're in a bigger hurry to leave than you are to have us go. God, boys," he ejaculated to his fellows, "what a story!"

In a twinkling the reporters had vanished, each in the direction of a telephone over which he could hurry this supersensation into his office.

For a space there was a profound and motionless silence in the room, save at first for some very sincere and vigorous snuffing into the handkerchiefs of Olivetta and Matilda. All eyes were fixed upon Mrs. De Peyster—waiting—waiting. As for that august personage, she sat below the awesome, imperturbable Mrs. De Peyster of the portrait, and oh, what a change was there in the one beneath—a huddled, twitching, wrinkled, ashen-faced old lady, with not a duchess-like line to her person!

"Well, Aunt Caroline?" Jack remarked at length.

"You think—it's all right?" she quavered.

"Yes."

"And I'm—I'm perfectly safe?"

"The position and dignity of Mrs. De Peyster are perfectly safe," returned he, with an emphasis on the "De Peyster."

"Oh, to think it's all over—and we're out of it!" said Olivetta hysterically.

"Oh! Oh!" And she limply pitched sidewise in her chair.

"Mees Harmon—Oleevetta!" cried M. Dubois. He sprang forward, knelt at her side and supported her wilted figure against his bosom. Upon this poultice to her troubles she relaxed and sobbed unrestrainedly. And no one, particularly Mrs. De Peyster, paid the least heed to this side episode.

John the coachman, the irreproachable, irreplaceable, unbendable John, his clean shaven mask of a face now somewhat pale—John took a few respectful paces toward his resurrected mistress.

"If you will not take it as a liberty, ma'am," said he, with his cadence of a prime minister, "I should like to express my relief and happiness at your restoration among us."

"Thank you—John," quavered Mrs. De Peyster.

John, having delivered his felicitations, bowed slightly and started to turn away. But Matilda had stepped forward behind him, an imploring look upon her face. "Please, ma'am—please ma'am!" said she, in a tone that left no doubt as to her meaning.

"Wait, John," weakly commanded Mrs. De Peyster.

John paused.

Mrs. De Peyster made an effort to collect some of her faculties. "John, Matilda has—has just confessed your engagement. She has also confessed how, during my—my absence—one night after driving with you she—she lost control of herself and seriously offended you. She asks me to apologize to you and tell you how very, very sorry she is."

"Indeed, I am, John!" put in Matilda fervently.

"It is my wish, John," continued Mrs. De Peyster, "that you should forgive her—and make up things between you—and be happy and stay with me forever."

Matilda timidly slipped an arm through John's. "Forgive me, John!" said she appealingly.

John's graven face exhibited a strange phenomenon—it twitched slightly. "Thank you, ma'am," said he. And

bowing respectfully, with Matilda upon his arm, he started out.

"You may go with them, Marie," said Mrs. De Peyster to the waiting maid. "But a little later I shall want you."

"Madame mean she ees going to keep me?" cried Marie with sudden joy.

"If you desire to stay, Marie."

"Oh, *merci*, madame!" And the happy Marie disappeared behind her more sedate superiors.

"Well, Mary, I guess we'd better be going, too," said Jack, taking his wife's hand. "Aunt Caroline"—a little defiantly—"I'm sorry that Mary Jones and I have by our trespassing caused you so much inconvenience. But Mary Jones and I and our things will be out of the house in an hour. Good-bye."

"Wait, Jack!" Mrs. De Peyster reached up a trembling hand and caught her nephew's sleeve. "Olivetta," said she, "perhaps you and your—your fiancé could find another place for your confidences."

"Oh!" exclaimed Olivetta, starting up with a flush. "Cousin Caroline, do you mean—"

Mrs. De Peyster lifted an interrupting hand. "Do as you like, but tell me about it later."

As the pair went out, Mrs. De Peyster slowly raised herself up and stood gazing for a moment at her nephew. "Do you

really—want to—leave me, Jack?" she asked in an unsteady voice.

"I have been invited to leave," said he a little stiffly, "but I have never been invited to come back."

With a hesitancy new to her she slipped an arm about Jack's shoulders. "Then I invite you, Jack," she said tremulously. "I'm—I'm getting to be an old woman—and I'm—I'm afraid I'm foolish—and I need you. Won't you stay, Jack?"

"And Mary?" said he.

She looked about at her dark-eyed little niece. "If Mary will stay, too, I'll"—a faint smile fluttered into her wrinkled face—"I'll try now and then to bend my back."

"What! Was that you that day?" gasped the horrified Mary.

Mrs. De Peyster slipped her other arm about her niece. "And I'll try not to act like my petrified family tree."

"Oh!"

"Or as if I were carved out of a solid block of dignity."

"Oh!"

Her arms drew the pair tightly, almost convulsively, to her, and she kissed Mary's fresh young cheek. "But if you'll stay with me"—there was a pleading, happy quaver in her voice—"if you'll stay with me, Mary, I'll try to be just as un-De-Peyster-like as I can!"



STANDPATTER—Don't you think Rantington's speeches are sound?
INSURGENT—Yes, but that's all.



A MAN is judged by what he has, a woman by what she has on.

THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN

By Louisa Fletcher Tarkington

I WISH that there were some wonderful place
 Called the Land of Beginning Again,
 Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
 And all of our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door,
 And never put on again.

I wish we could come on it all unaware,
 Like the hunter who finds a lost trail;
And I wish that the one whom our blindness had done
 The greatest injustice of all
Could be at the gates, like an old friend that waits
 For the comrade he's gladdest to hail.

We would find all the things we intended to do
 But forgot, and remembered—too late,
Little praises unspoken, little promises broken,
 And all of the thousand and one
Little duties neglected that might have perfected
 The day for one less fortunate.

It wouldn't be possible not to be kind
 In the Land of Beginning Again;
And the ones we misjudged and the ones whom we grudged
 Their moments of victory here
Would find in the grasp of our loving handclasp
 More than penitent lips could explain.

For what had been hardest we'd know had been best,
 And what had seemed loss would be gain;
For there isn't a sting that will not take wing
 When we've faced it and laughed it away;
And I think that the laughter is most what we're after
 In the Land of Beginning Again!

So I wish that there were some wonderful place
 Called the Land of Beginning Again,
 Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches
 And all of our poor, selfish grief
Could be dropped, like a shabby old coat, at the door,
 And never put on again.

IRON BARS

By Anne Warner

IT was Saturday afternoon and the dressing rooms at the dancing school were continually filling and emptying as a steady stream of boys, girls and mothers climbed the stairs and proceeded to make ready for the happiest three hours of each week.

Such a changing of shoes and smoothing of bows, such a jerking down of cuffs and adjustment of fluffy little skirts, such a swish of murmured reminders and such a whirr of interchanged laughs! Then in ones, twos or threes, they all trooped out upon the big polished floor beyond, and the mothers followed sedately and took their places upon the row of seats "behind."

There was a new boy today, a very pretty boy with big dark eyes and soft curly hair. He was carefully dressed in a lovely little suit, and his mother was there with all the other mothers, upon the row of seats behind. The other mothers had made a place for her with a sort of quick carefulness, and now they talked to her in just the same way. She was a white little woman with flushed hollows in her cheeks, and her eyes were fixed steadily upon her boy.

"He will be here all winter, will he not?" one mother asked. His mother started, looked up quickly; her eyes filled.

"Yes; we are going to live with my father," she said.

Just then the door opening out of the girls' dressing room creaked, and the last arrival emerged therefrom to take her place in the two long lines forming to practise. The last arrival was always the last to arrive, and knew that she would be last and never cared. She was a serene and queenly little maiden,

of incredibly few years, and held her head extremely high. Her nurse accompanied her, and knitted on a seat apart the whole afternoon through. Her nurse came with her because her parents were in Europe. She had an aunt who was married in Singapore. She had had an uncle killed in a motor accident. Her grandfather was a millionaire. She wore white kid gloves to dancing school, while the other little girls wore no gloves at all. It will be readily divined that this was the belle of the afternoon each week.

Then the two long lines fell to practising and soon the pretty little girl saw the new boy. She stared at him till he colored. "Who is he?" she whispered to the next girl.

"I don't know," the next girl whispered back. "His name is Willy Blake," the girl on the other side whispered. "Oh!" said the young heiress, and contemplated Willy Blake until his very ears blazed.

That was all for that week.

The next week everyone knew about Willy Blake. Some parents, who talked about everything before their children, even talked about the family affairs of Willy Blake before their children, and their children told all the children of the more reticent parents.

"Why, his father's in jail," one boy announced to another the next Saturday as they shared a shoe horn turn and turn about. "He'll be there ten years. He stole a lot of money."

"Great Scott!" said the other boy, who was just graduating out of "jimmy" and hadn't reached things designated by dashes yet. "Well, what do you think of that?"

"I'll bet I don't speak to him," said the first boy, "and my sister sha'n't dance with him if I can help it."

This noble stand evoked the admiration of the whole room. There was a moment of excitement, and then everyone agreed not to have anything to do with Willy Blake. A few seconds later Willy Blake came in and they all departed at once, leaving him in the dressing room alone. He hung up his coat and hat, took his pumps out of their bag and put them on, then went out to join the others.

He hadn't been out on the floor one minute before his big eyes were twice as big and his pretty mouth, with the full, sensitive lips, was hardly possible to hold firm. When he took his place in the line the boys on either side made excuses and dodged to other places further down. Willy Blake was left alone between two vacancies. There is a great difference between just being alone and being alone between two vacated places. Willy Blake looked very forlorn. His mother was watching him and trying to smile; he looked at her and tried to smile back. He and his mother were both courageous, but they were also heart-broken, and the knowledge that each was crying for the other made two sensitive mouths quiver instead of just one.

The practice began, and the dancing master moved the line up so that there were no spaces. But no one spoke to Willy Blake. Then the door opened and the little princess walked forth, body-guarded by her nurse as usual. She joined her line and fell into the step with the ease that follows up many years of dancing lessons. One, two, three forward—one, two, three back; then she saw Willy Blake and smiled and nodded. The girl at her side gave her a poke with her elbow.

"Did you do that on purpose?" demanded the princess.

"Yes; you mustn't speak to that boy."

"Why not?"

"His father's in jail."

"What for?"

"He stole ever so much money."

The princess turned and stared at the

speaker. "Isn't anyone going to speak to him?" she asked.

"No."

"How awful mean!"

The practice was over just then and the two lines broke up. Everybody went to sit down. The princess should have gone to her nurse, who always took this opportunity to "stand up" her hair bow all fresh, but instead she went to where Willy Blake stood a little uncertain as to what to do.

"My name's Nellie," she said in a very sweet tone. "Tell me, have you got any pets?"

He was too startled to answer at once; in the first crush of a fresh accentuation to sorrow one doesn't quickly adjust oneself to pleasant surprises. "I had a pony," he said, after a minute—"but it's sold now."

"Do you want to come out and ride mine some day? I have a nice one."

"Thanks," he said painfully.

"Are you going to be here long?"

"I don't know."

"Come and let's sit down," she said; "we'll talk."

The whole school was looking at them, but he didn't know it and she didn't care. "You will come and ride the pony some day, won't you?" she said. "I'll show you our aviary, too. Did you ever see an aviary?"

"No. I don't know what it is."

"It's birds—all kinds of birds. We have a house for them and they all fly about together. They're pretty."

When they danced a polka later she went to him and said with all the *sang froid* of a suffragette: "Do ask me to dance with you."

The mothers were staring, too, now, and his mother's whole face was flushed like her hollow cheeks. The nurse had laid down her knitting and was become contemplative.

"Tell me," Nellie whispered in her partner's ear, "is it true about your father?"

She felt a shock run over him. "Yes," he said, "it's true."

"I'm so sorry for you. But you mustn't mind. Papa often speaks of very nice men and says they belong in

prison. Columbus was in prison—and Lady Jane Grey.” She had evidently been getting up her material while practising.

“I can’t talk about it,” said Willy Blake.

“No, we won’t. Of course you don’t like to. But you’ll have a nice time when you come and see me and ride my pony—won’t you?”

He promised to go and see her.

But he never went. Before the next dancing class she and her nurse had been summoned to New York to meet the returning papa and mamma. Blake was left to make his fight alone. Very much alone.

He never saw the pretty little girl again. He did, however, long years afterward, see the woman who was bone of her bone and flesh of her flesh. And that is the second part of this story.

It was in another land than that where he was born that the pretty little boy grew into a strong, stalwart, resolute man.

The big soft eyes grew bright and keen in that far-off country; the sensitive lips steadied; Willy became William, and his mother—delicate and bowed in her widow’s crape—tried to say, “I am happy,” because her son bade fair to find life all success.

It doesn’t matter how or where he worked or how fast and steadily he climbed that upward way. The day came when many hundreds of men looked to his rulings and were almost slaves to his will. He was very resolute and almost hard to those about him—hardest of all to himself. In himself he allowed no laxness; to himself he permitted no mercy. All who worked with him had to work on his plane—otherwise they fell behind and soon found themselves cast out completely. Here was a school for youthful business talent the light of which might not be long hidden under the bushel of its own roof. There was constant pressure to get the beginners in life a chance to begin “with Mr. Blake.” Discipline is so scarce and so precious a jewel that, like hard labor in hard times, men must often walk until footsore to try and find it.

One day Blake—now a man of forty-five, thickset, with nothing of the dainty pagelike figure of those other days left in his make-up—sat in his private office, discussing a very sad affair with his manager.

“You say it is the third time?”

“Yes, the third time. It’s no use, Mr. Blake; a thief is a thief. You can’t cure ‘em. It’s in the blood.”

The head of the business seemed to wince slightly and looked along the blade of a paper cutter which he held in his hand. “Don’t put it too strong,” he said, coughing some huskiness out of his throat. “I don’t believe in the ‘unto the third and fourth generation,’ you know. But, really, man, what you tell me is awful. How old is he?”

“Twenty-two or three.”

“Married?”

“No.”

“Wild?”

“Oh, I dare say.”

“No family ties?”

“No; his mother is living, but she roams around enjoying herself as she chooses, I should imagine. Doesn’t pay much attention to the boy.”

“Hasn’t he any father?”

“The father’s dead. The money came from the mother’s father. You must have heard of the grandfather, that famous old rascal of—” He named the Western American city where the children had once had dancing school every Saturday afternoon. “If ever there was a man who deserved the penitentiary, that was he,” said the manager with fervor. “No wonder his grandson’s a born forger.”

William Blake had lifted the paper cutter to the level of his eyes and was sighting along its surface. There were a few seconds of silence, and then he said:

“But the family make good the losses.”

The other looked surprised. “Yes, of course—why; yes, of course. But you can’t run a business with forged cheques even if they are made good when found out.”

“No—I know that. And you say he has a mother?”

"Yes."

"Where is she now? Do you know?"

"I believe she's in Paris—or Rome; he spoke of her the other day. I'll ask him for her address if you like."

"No, no," said Blake, putting the paper cutter quickly down, "don't do that. I—I don't care to be personally drawn into it at all. How did we come even to get the boy here?"

"He came out through Simmons—you remember old Simmons?"

"Simmons—yes, of course I do. So that was how! Well, well!" He raised the paper cutter again.

"Well, what do you think, sir—shall we turn him off?"

"Yes, it's the only thing to do. Just let him go quietly. He has money and won't starve. Let him out to go it alone."

"He'll go it hard enough, I'm afraid."

"Perhaps, but we've overlooked enough."

Accordingly the only child of the little princess who had once been kind to a forger's son was now cast out for the same crime. Very few know how terribly common that crime is, or how deep down in the spirits of the sons of those men who will do anything *but* forge it is implanted. The crimes that spell business and social success—speculation, watering stock, playing with money held in trust—how gaily these go by! And then the victorious man of wealth, in his hale and hearty elder days, finds himself suddenly punished out of all reason—as he finds it—by his son, who had "every advantage," suddenly being discovered committing what we all call openly "crime"—quite another matter, the father feels. Oh, the deeds of darkness that come forth to light in our children's actions!

It was but a few days after that a card was taken into Blake's private office early one afternoon. He looked at it and his face altered slightly.

"Is the lady waiting?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Show her in."

Then the princess, now tall, beautiful, *distinguée*, wearing velvet and sables, came undulating in.

"Mr. Blake?"

He was standing up. "I am Mr. Blake," he said.

She gave him her hand, putting up her veil as she did so.

"Do you know me?" she asked.

"I would not have known you, but I have been told."

"I never knew that you were that little boy until yesterday."

Blake sat down quietly. "I think that we need not discuss those secrets either here or elsewhere," he said a little coldly.

"But how successful you've been! When did you come here?"

"Many years ago. My grandfather left me a fortune and my mother and I went away."

"How strange!"

He sat quietly.

"Mr. Blake, I've come to speak to you quite frankly—you remember I was always a frank little thing."

"What is it?"

"You don't mind frankness?"

"Not at all."

"You know Caryll's difficulties?"

Blake's face shaded. "Yes," he said.

"He's very young."

"Twenty-two."

"But that's very young."

He said nothing.

"I must tell you the truth. I'm not rich any more."

He lifted his eyes and swept her from top to toe.

"I had all these before the money went."

"Well?"

"I want you to take Caryll back."

He just lowered his eyelids.

"He won't do a thing for me. I haven't money enough for us both. And—and I was kind to you when you were in trouble." Her voice sank. "Do you remember that day in dancing school—almost forty years ago?"

He was perfectly still, biting his lip.

"Won't you do it?" She leaned her elbow on the table and her slender gloved hand supported her chin. "You can make a man out of him." Her voice sunk to low sweetness. "Won't you give him a chance?"

"He's had three," said Blake hoarsely.

"Three!"

"Yes."

"Give him another chance—for my sake. Please."

Blake bit his lip.

"For my sake."

He lifted up his eyes and looked into hers. Why had he not loved her in that long ago? The first girl figure of his life. He remembered dizzily.

Suddenly she had risen and stood beside him, her hand upon his shoulder. "You'll give him the chance?" she whispered.

"I can't," he murmured; "it's impossible."

Her hand pressed down. "Are you married?" she asked.

He shut his eyes, opened them, glanced toward the office door which was closed, then said hoarsely:

"Yes."

She gave a little start and drew away.

"You'd better take him with you," the man said then, more or less unsteadily. "Out here he'll fall to gambling and go from bad to worse."

"Yes," she said. She was very pale. "No one told me that you were married," she said uncertainly; then: "Have you any children?"

"Ten," said William Blake briefly. She stared at him, then took up her muff and sighed.

"I'll take him with me," she said.

Ten minutes later the manager was called to the inner sanctuary.

"I want to tell you something," said the head of them all, who was clearing up his desk. "I've told you before but you forget. Don't ever forget again. If a woman comes here on business always leave the door ajar. I could only get rid of my last caller by saying that I had a wife and ten children."



RECESSIONAL

By Helen Hamilton Dudley

LIKE pious monks in faded gray,
To chant the holy mass,
The shadows march across the way
With muffled lips that seem to say
Their prayer beads as they pass—
The rosary of hours fled;
Each shadow prays for something dead,
Some joy that died that day.

Like silent monks all in a row,
Stern with fasting, bent in prayer,
With measured footsteps sad and slow
In dreaming ranks the shadows flow
And vanish in the starlit air;
Life's sounds of discontent are stilled,
And all the quiet world is filled
With music as they go.

EAVESDROPPING

By Marion Brunot

THE widow's formula for getting a husband:
Be in the right place at the right time, and it doesn't matter whether you
are the right girl or not.

The débutante's decision:

A woman and a lorgnette form a lookout committee for the discovery of social
microbes.

The maiden's dream of a perfect lover:

One who sends orchids and kisses often and dies the day before the wedding
bells ring.

The stork's wail:

"The higher the fewer" must be significant of society and race suicide.

The popular girl's query:

What's the use of running after a man when he's coming toward you?

The cynic's philosophy:

A man's morals mellow with money and maturity.

The ladykiller's joke:

A nation without women would be stagnation.

The bald-headed man's soliloquy:

Toupee or not toupee, that is the question.



A SAD SEA TALE

By A. W. Cooke

A MERMAID sat beside the sea;
Early she wept and late.
"Ah, me!" she sighed. "Hard as I've tried,
I can't be up to date;
For though I smoke, and though I flirt,
I cannot wear a harem skirt."



MATCHES may be made in Heaven. But they are made light of on earth.

A LESSON IN MECHANICS

By Berton Braley

MERRIAM was enthralled. This was not extraordinary or unusual, for Merriam had always found Miss Wilson charming, and under the influence of moonlight and music had several times been on the verge of a proposal.

But his common sense had always rescued him in time; and his common sense was whispering now as Miss Wilson chatted gaily.

"Unquestionably," his common sense averred, "she is a pretty girl, a merry girl, a bright girl. But she's frivolous; she loves society; and her clothes would bankrupt you. Look at her hands, dainty, soft white hands, pink finger tips—well, think of her trying to make bread or wash dishes! Nothing to it, old man; she wouldn't do as the wife of a man who can't afford a cook and a second maid and a half-dozen others."

"True, true," Merriam answered his common sense, "but she would look awfully sweet and pretty across the breakfast table; and her eyes are so blue and her voice so melodious and her hair—"

"I don't believe you are listening at all," Miss Wilson complained, interrupting the silent dialogue between Merriam and his inner monitor.

"Er—yes, why, of course I was listening," he lied. "You were talking about—ah, about—"

"About ten minutes since you last heard me, I think," the girl laughed. "You must have been dreaming of that wonderful motor boat of yours. They tell me you spend nearly all your time out in it—and I suppose you must think a good deal about it on a day like this when the air just tempts one to get out."

"Not in *my* boat," Merriam protested fervently.

"Why not?" Miss Wilson queried. "I think you're fearfully selfish with that craft, anyhow. I've been trying for weeks to inveigle an invitation from *you* to *me* for a boat ride, and I've failed; now I'm going to throw all my scruples to the winds, and *I'm* going to ask *you* to take *me* out in it."

"But my boat is a clumsy old one-lung tub, with grease and paint and oil and dirt all over it; and it hasn't anything in it to sit on except a disreputable old folding chair."

"I don't care. I want to ride in it, and I'll consider that you are not a nice person unless you take me right out this afternoon. Where do you keep your boat?"

"At a little pier down the river about half a mile," Merriam admitted, not very graciously. "It isn't fit to be shown with these crack craft around the clubhouse here. But I simply can't take you out. The boat is dirty and it leaks and—"

"You've said most of that before," Miss Wilson pointed out, "and it just makes it all the more fun. I'm all ready; shall we start now?"

She rose from her porch chair.

Merriam looked at her immaculate gown, at her white shoes, her white lacy hat.

"You aren't going in that dress, are you?" he asked solicitously. "Why, it would ruin it."

"Oh, no. This is a wash gown, and dirt won't hurt it a particle. These shoes are old, and even the hat is washable. Besides, it's too much trouble to change, and you might run away and

hide while I went back to the house to get into another dress. I'm not going to take any chances on losing this ride. Come on."

Miss Wilson danced across the broad club piazza and Merriam followed, reluctantly but helplessly. It was evident that this young lady had a way with her—her own way mostly.

During the walk to the boathouse he made one or two half-hearted protests, but Miss Wilson tossed them airily aside and said she was determined to ride in that boat if she had to run it herself. When they reached the pier where the *Toad*—as Merriam had scornfully christened his tub—bobbed clumsily up and down in the wash of the passing steamers, Miss Wilson leaped lightly into it without waiting for Merriam to assist her, and perched herself on the forward hatch, where she swung her feet happily and gazed impishly at her escort.

Merriam was not proud of his boat. Its high speed was five miles an hour and its average about three. His usual mode of procedure was to wait for favorable tides, because when he ran against them his progress was measured by inches. Any motion of the craft at all was accomplished only at the expense of tremendous vibratory struggles on the part of the engine, accompanied by a noise like continuous musketry fire.

So it was almost sullenly that he lifted the cover off his engine hatch—for the boat's former owner had carefully inclosed the motor so it should be hard to get at—and clambered over the machinery to reach the gasoline cut-off. Then he recollected that the suit he had on was scarcely the thing to muss around the engine with, and he had to beg Miss Wilson to get off the forward hatch while he dug out his overalls from the conglomerate mass of rags, tags and bottles jammed into that bulkhead.

After vainly endeavoring to untangle the trousers from two towels, a lantern and fifty feet of clothesline, Merriam impatiently gave them a jerk. They came away with unexpected suddenness. The little boat lurched violently; Miss Wilson screamed and Merriam grabbed her just in time to save her from going

overboard. She trembled a little in his arms at her escape, then released herself and laughed. Rather ruefully she glanced down at her skirt, on which several dirt and oil stains already appeared.

Merriam, whose heart was pounding madly at holding her for even that brief moment, recovered his equanimity sufficiently to note the glance and the condition of the gown.

"You see," he said, "what I told you. I'll take you right home."

"You won't do anything of the kind," Miss Wilson retorted; "if you do I'll never speak to you again as long as I live. I came to get a ride and I'm going to have one—and, anyhow, I'm having the time of my young life right now."

Merriam sighed resignedly and from the jumble in the bow wrenched forth a folding campchair, which he arranged carefully for Miss Wilson to occupy. She sat down in it and it collapsed. She shrieked, but it was with laughter, and jumped to her feet without assistance.

"I guess I belong up here on top," she gurgled, and resumed her former seat on the hatch.

With his jumper and overalls on Merriam climbed over the engine, bent himself double, twisted sidewise, and with a vast effort which would have done credit to any professional contortionist, reached and turned on the petcock which controlled the flow of gasoline into the carbureter. The boat's former owner never *did* explain why he put that petcock in such an inaccessible place.

Unwinding himself, Merriam wormed back to the motor and with much deliberation began his preparations for starting it. He looked over his connections, tried the carbureter to see if there was gasoline in it, opened the oil cups, then closed them again, tested the spark and oiled the bearings. Everything seemed all right.

He threw over the flywheel. The exhaust coughed hollowly twice and subsided. He tried it again; another and more consumptive cough resulted. He gazed at the engine, scratched his head, then oscillated the wheel a couple of times, threw it over—and got the same cough.

He heard a suppressed feminine chuckle and glanced over his shoulder to find Miss Wilson's face peering over it.

"I do so love to watch a man fuss with engines and things," she explained. "I just couldn't stay up there all alone, so I came down to see you start the boat."

Merriam grinned, half in embarrassment—and confessed.

"You see, Miss Wilson," he said, "I kind of got stuck on this boat, and I don't know much about it anyway. I've been on the water all my life, and I could paddle you safely through whirlpool rapids in a canoe, but I'm not much on this motor boat thing."

He bent down and whirled the fly-wheel vigorously. The last gasp of a dying man answered him.

"Shouldn't you turn this or—or something?" Miss Wilson asked innocently, putting her finger on the lever which lets gasoline into the cylinder.

"I have the intelligence of a large clam," Merriam observed. "Of course that is what's the trouble. You can't start a boat without gasoline in the cylinder. Gee, but I'm a great little engineer!"

He moved the lever and flung over the wheel again. With an ear splitting racket the engine responded. A cloud of blackish smoke poured out of the exhaust; the craft rushed to the end of its leash and then stopped with a jerk. Miss Wilson caromed against the forward bulkhead and fell in a heap. Merriam looked dazed for an instant, took a step forward to help his guest, then recalled enough of his wits to throw open the switch. The motor stopped racing and the resultant stillness was almost painful. Miss Wilson said, as Merriam helped her again to her feet:

"My! It starts suddenly, doesn't it?"

He glanced at her suspiciously, for her voice had in it an exquisite shade of irony, but there was no hint of this in her face or her eyes. She was only, it appeared, remarking upon a peculiarity of his boat.

He swung the nose of the craft out into the stream, untied the painter, set the steering wheel, which was right near the engine, and started operations again.

The first essay was resultless, but he remedied this failure by closing the switch, and in response to his next whirl of the wheel the exhaust barked madly, the little boat vibrated mightily and away she went, bumping heavily and drunkenly over the choppy river waves, for she was a dory, stanch enough, seaworthy enough, but flat-bottomed and clumsy.

For fully five minutes the dory puffed and "putted" importantly upstream, while Miss Wilson, from her seat on the forward hatch, smiled gaily and encouragingly at Merriam. Her lips moved, and she doubtless said something, but the clamor of that one-lung engine drowned out her words.

Then Merriam began to hear noises and to smell smells around the motive power, and leaving the boat to steer herself for a minute he sought the source of trouble. He found that he had forgotten to turn on his oil cups or to fill the lubricant boxes. This he proceeded to do. It required that he bury his head and shoulders under the hatch, where he could not see, but he knew that the river was almost clear of other boats and he thought there was no danger.

All at once the dory lurched and then began to toss up and down. Merriam straightened up, to find Miss Wilson standing by him, her hand on the wheel, her face pale, and a rather tremulous smile on her lips. Just astern a big excursion boat was rushing down the river.

"What's the matter?" Merriam demanded.

"N-nothing," Miss Wilson half shrieked above the noise of the motor, "except that that big steamer came around a curve and I—I couldn't make you hear, and we were running right into it and—and—so I came down and steered us out of danger."

"By George!" shouted Merriam. "You're a plucky little girl! Why, I was seven kinds of a fool to leave that wheel so long, but I forgot—"

The motor began to miss, and he peered down at it perplexed.

"Confound the fool thing!" he yelled. "It's always doing things like this and I

can't tell what's wrong. Wonder what ails it now?"

Miss Wilson bent over the engine hatch, too.

"Shut it off," she commanded, pointing to the switch.

Merriam obeyed, and the engine stopped.

"Now please," she said, pushing him gently aside, "let me look at it. I know about sewing machines and things; maybe I can make something of this."

"But—but your clothes!" he exclaimed.

"I told you my dress would wash, stupid!" said Miss Wilson. "And that I didn't care, anyhow. Now don't you say another word."

The tone was one of such half-chummy, half-coquettish *timbre* that Merriam grinned like a bashful boy and stood by while the girl rolled up her sleeves over an arm that he noticed was firm and strong in spite of its dimpled roundness.

She bent over the engine with a puzzled frown, shut off the gasoline and the spark, tested the connections and then tried the switch. The spark was very weak.

"Hum," she said, her pretty lips pursed in a way that Merriam thought entrancing. He was thinking a lot of things as he stood and watched her, and one of them was that the hands his common sense thought incapable of making bread seemed to look pretty capable and efficient in among these levers and things. Maybe his common sense had been wrong; maybe—

"I think," said Miss Wilson, "that the spark or whatever you call it is the trouble. Probably the difficulty is in this box." She put her hand on the batteries. "Let's take 'em out and see."

The boat was drifting down with the tide, but Merriam knew they had plenty of room in the big river and plenty of time; so he took out the batteries—to find under one of them a piece of steel!

"Aha!" exclaimed Miss Wilson. "A short circuit!"

She clapped her hands.

There was a smudge of grease on her

nose; her dress was streaked with oil and grease and dirt; her shoes were stained with black—and she looked prettier than ever Merriam remembered to have seen any girl look. "Stands *that* test," Merriam said to himself. "A pretty woman who can look sweet under these circumstances is no parlor ornament. And I thought she wouldn't do!"

Aloud he said: "Where did *you* ever hear of a short circuit?"

"In school, of course. I just loved electricity when we studied it. Now, let's try the engine."

Before Merriam noticed what she was doing she had put back the batteries, connected them swiftly, opened the gasoline and the spark levers, closed the switch and flung over the flywheel. That wheel, Merriam knew, was heavy, and the compression of the engine no easy thing to overcome, but Miss Wilson turned it easily and capably; and as the engine began again its staccato clamor, she hopped to Merriam's seat above the motor, put her hand on the steering wheel, and with the wind blowing through her hair and her eyes alight with sheer joy took charge.

"Now you go up forward," she said, "and sit down while somebody runs this boat that knows how."

"Knows how!" Merriam shouted—he had to shout to make himself heard above the noise of the engine. "Well, when did you learn how?"

"Last summer," she said simply, every dimple showing. "My brother owns three motor boats, and I won a race with a six-cylinder racer on the lakes."

Merriam reached for the switch and threw it open.

"Confound this clamorous beast of an engine!" he complained as it stopped. "It won't give a man a chance to talk. Miss Wilson, I've wanted to say for a long time that I—that you—that I want you—"

The engine started again with a tremendous clatter, for the young lady had closed the switch, and for once the motor resumed its activity without human hand on the flywheel.

"What did you do that for?" Merriam shouted.

"Because I want to run the engine," Miss Wilson said.

She pointed the boat toward a spot about a mile up the shore, and at the imperious wave of her hand Merriam walked forward and sat down. There he sulked.

"All your work," he said savagely to his common sense, "all your confounded work. If you'd let me alone I'd have proposed to her long ago, when I had moonlight and romantic music and all those things with me. Now see what I'm up against! I just discover that you're all wrong and that she's all right, and when I want to propose it's broad daylight and in a beastly old tub of a boat and she tells me to go up forward and shut up while she shows me how to run my own dory. Fine chance I've got!

"As a matter of fact, I guess I didn't care very much whether she was capable or not. I think I'd have given you the sack, old common sense, anyhow; but I reckon it wouldn't have done me any good. She doesn't want to hear what I have to say; she doesn't intend that I shall make love to her at all. She's kind enough and sweet enough and dear

enough and capable enough and jolly enough to drive a man clean crazy—but she's not going to let me tell her what I think about her. She's too fine and gentle to want to turn me down, and so she's giving me the subtle hint."

Merriam was gazing through this reverie at Miss Wilson in a way that would have betrayed him to the blindest of observers. There was longing and hunger and love and worship in his eyes, and the fervor of his regard turned Miss Wilson's cheeks to pink. She gazed upstream steadily while he dreamed and stared and sighed.

"Funny she stays out here at all with me," Merriam's inner voice went on, "but it's evident she likes to run the boat, in spite of its noise and vibration. She came for a ride—and she's getting it. Gee—I wonder if there's some other chap?"

A sudden silence assailed his ears. The engine had stopped; the boat was moving very slowly. They were in a quiet little bayou shielded from the river, with trees that grew to the water's edge. So far as the world was concerned they were alone. There was a wonderful cadence and thrill in Miss Wilson's voice as she said: "What was it you were going to tell me out on the river?"



BORUM—The brain market is always bullish.
SCOREM—That explains why most of us are bears.



MANY men marry because they're tired of living alone; many women marry because they are so tired of society that they want to live alone—with a man. Both get their desires—and their deserts.

August, 1911—4

THE ROAD FROM TOWN

By Ruth Kauffman

I WANT your feet to tread me
And beat my white dust down;
I lie here waiting—waiting;
I am the Road from Town.

I am the King of Country,
With buoyant birds and flowers,
And hay sweet fields and thistledown
And lazy, languid hours;
With golden dawns that lure you
And lead your questing feet
Into the crimson sunset,
Serene, secure, complete.

*Come tread me, taskmen, tread me,
And beat my white dust down;
Come see the whole world mating
Beside the Road from Town.*

You patter on your pavements
Of bruising cobble stone,
Amid your crowding millions,
Forevermore alone.
My hills are green and fertile
And empty as your hand;
Here are no peopled mountains;
Here is no ruined land.

*Come tread me, oh, come tread me!
Come beat my warm dust down!
Come laugh, forget and tramp again
The Road from Care and Town!*



SOME men bank on hope, others draw on their imagination, while the majority must only check their desires.

THE WOMAN IN THE PICTURE

By Mabel Wood Martin

CLAUDIA, returning precipitately and in tears from a reception, threw open the door of her room, tore off her wraps and sank despairingly on her knees by a chair.

She recalled bitterly the galling fragments of conversation that had reached her ears.

"'The *second* Mrs. Chillingworth'—with their lorgnettes like searchlights on my raw soul; and, 'You remember the first!'

"What is it that everybody so remembers about her?

"'To put this gray nun in the niche of a goddess—what was Roy Chillingworth thinking of?' 'The general wonder'—'To safeguard his memories perhaps.'

"Those terrible words! I ran through the streets; how hostile they seemed—and the houses, looking down so coldly on me, who came to take the place of her who all her life had called these places home!

"Here, at least, is one place that is mine. How fiercely I have changed everything—except that one room upstairs. Nobody would ever know now that she had spent a day under this roof. She was only a sojourner, after all. It is I who have come to stay.

"Ah, that is what I try to think; but it isn't true. Wherever I go, I feel her footsteps just before me. What witchery did she fasten upon all these people that they don't forget? I've worked for my place like a slave for his freedom, and I have to acknowledge that this is *her* world. Her personality lies upon it like a seal. Unless one is truly great, one sinks into oblivion when one dies; what has she done to survive the com-

mon lot? Hers was only a private character; outside her own circle she was never known. Why, then, does she continue to live when another has been appointed to her place? I am defeated—after giving all that love and labor can give; for if she is so omnipresent in other minds, how—how must she be in his?

"'To safeguard memories of another woman'! So that to the end will be my part—forever a substitute in the drama of life! And I believed that I was to inherit the earth! What a horrible lot—all that is my eternal self appropriated, not for his supreme happiness, but to shorten the way to her! And I am young—and I care—so cruelly!

"I rejoiced that I was giving more, more than any other woman. Knowing that public imagination granted no place in the fields of romance to our love story, I yielded myself with a deeper renunciation. I tried to make our path flower more wonderfully than all those others. I threw my whole soul into the struggle, and I've nothing left. I have spent in vain. It has been a long duel between a live woman and a dead one, and she has won.

"I wonder what she was like? I should like to see with my own eyes and pass judgment upon her. They talk a great deal of a certain picture—it must be up in *that* room. I wonder if I could find—"

Claudia rose and searched about the room. "Keys are such wanton things. They are always designed to fit just one door, to open one mystery—but they lend themselves so facilely to strange locks."

With the keys she had found she crept hesitatingly up to the third floor of the house, to a door which, after some effort, she succeeded in opening.

"How still it is up here—as if time were no longer divided into days! What a strange calm! I feel as if my heart would never leap or sink again. And the sunlight—I never saw anything quite so softly bright. It seems to be touching pensively the places where somebody has passed. After all, it is such a little space in the house to be given over to the woman who once owned it all.

"In which one of these chests is the picture?"

She opened one, and gazing down at its contents, gave a little gasp.

"Her clothes! The outer shell—the index of her. Such color and radiance! These garments positively sing a posthumous sonata of life. I am almost afraid to touch them—they might come alive. If there is a law governing the relationship of persons and colors, how splendidly she must have lent herself to its expression—a magnificent prism with a chord in her nature for every phase of life. And to take so much light out of the world—no wonder they missed her!"

Moving the clothing gently aside, she discovered the picture. "I won't look at it till I have placed it in a good light. It is a strange introduction. What would she say if she were to speak?"

Claudia adjusted the picture near the window and retreated to the other end of the room. She gathered herself nervously, plucking at her hair and smoothing her gown.

"I never experienced a meeting that made my heart beat like this." Advancing quickly before the picture, she stopped and stood still in front of it for a long time.

"I—I thought you would be lovely—but I didn't quite dream of this." She spoke wistfully. "What a wonderful beauty! It touches some inner spot like the perfume from a far-off hidden flower. It is an incantation—a spell that, passing over one, makes one dream

of—well, I feel all the anger and the ache going out of me. It clutches about the heart, this charm of the soul, that I cannot describe other than as something like God's kiss upon the brow."

She stood looking into the eyes of the picture.

"Are you trying to charm me—to voluntary abdication—to the point where I'll take the dregs—and take them gladly? You know me! I see the recognition—the strange, quiet acceptance of my presence.

"We can't go on forever this way—it is this I came to tell you. One of us must give up. It is all over with you, Woman in the Picture. You're gone—and my moment has come. Oh, won't you give me my chance—my husband—my world?"

"Ah, how could they help remembering you, when I, who hated you so, feel that I, too, might grow to care?"

Two days later she stood for the third time before the picture.

"Do you wonder why I keep coming back—as if there could ever be anything between you and me? I wonder, too.

"It must be that I am lonely, with Roy gone all day, and in a strange place with no one that cares for me. I don't like to go out. They hurt me so. It is strange, but there is no pain about you. In the still sweetness of your presence there's a kind of companionship; I feel as if you were kinder than all the rest, as if you were even gently sorry for me.

"If fate had put us in any other juxtaposition, we might have been friends. It almost seems that you *do* care. Perhaps the experience of death has given you a higher outlook, freed you from the shackles of self. You can look back detachedly on all this as only a fragment of existence.

"But with me it must always be different. You are still the woman that holds my husband's heart. I am sorry, but at the least evidence of your memory in him I grow hard against you again; the friendliness departs; I could do anything against you and yet care for you all the while. How well it is that you are so far above me that you could never fall into my power! The highest emo-

tion in the human compass is within my reach—love for my rival, who took with her when she went all that I would give my soul to gain.

"Yet I like to sit beside you, your soothing beauty, your gentleness. I wonder what it is you keep thinking—thinking? In this quiet room I seem at times almost to touch your thoughts; they escape me into infinity.

"That deep wistfulness, that rapt gravity of look, of what are they the sign? Something that happened once that you are trying to correlate with the change in which you find yourself? Is it life or death you are thinking out?

"As I study you closer, strange things seem to appear—things that I can't connect with you. Is that the mark of pain? Can that be grief? What does it all mean? You possessed the world, and yet—you knew despair! This secret sorrow that settled into your soul, what could it have been? It comes out from the hiding place of the years pitifully begging for itself. I can't bear to look. It is too poignantly sad, this aching thing that looks out at me. So, Woman in the Picture, it is on common ground, after all, that we meet! Reach out your heart to me, for we are two women suffering our age old grief."

(*The next day.*)

"Your look haunted me all night long—the sadness of it, the hurt, squeezed round my heart like a hand. How could *you* have suffered, you wonderful creature? Life showered itself upon you. Look at this sunlight. It hangs about here like a dog in the place from which its master has gone. Light, life and love—and yet that wound down deep in your soul. Who could have put it there? Not Roy—never, never he. You, yourself? Is it the shadow of unrest in your eyes? Are you vainly pursuing the dead years, trying to recall something that they held? I shall never know, for you took your secret with you where no one will ever read it.

"Tomorrow I am coming to put all your lovely things away. Only a man's clumsy hands folded them before. And with you—what is to be done? I can't

leave you in that dark chest. It would be like trampling on flowers, shutting out sunlight. A thing so graciously lovely was meant to gladden the world. Would Roy—would all these people like to have you where they could greet you again? Ah, I can see them looking, conjuring up the past. Just to look upon your face again, woman who is gone, who knows what it might mean to some of them? Worlds might start to move again, and the earth gardens to bloom.

"A wide arc of desolation you must have left behind you—that morning when they brought you in from under those horrible wheels. Even for me life would have seemed for a while to go into an eclipse. And Roy—*what must it have been for him?*

"You see, I am coming to care, too, to feel with the rest of the world that some of you is *mine*. I would do much for you—in all but that one way. As regards him, I cannot change; there you must not enter. He comes here sometimes, but he must not any more.

"I will send you away. Where? In an art gallery you would be—but Roy would go there, too, to see you.

"Ah, where, I wonder, woman who came before me, would it be your heart's desire to go? Above whose hearth, in all the wide world, would you elect to live? Roy's? That could not be. I belong there, and you know there can be but one.

"There may be some other's—the home where you were born—looking out on the places where you were a girl, dreaming over the times before there was any emotion, confronting the father whose life you were. Or did you love the worship of the crowds? Would you like all day long to see them pass and give their homage to a beauty as immortal as the figures on the Grecian urn? To live—live forever when all the rest of us are gone?"

(*Another day.*)

"Ah, I know now—I know. If only the knowledge could be torn out of my brain—dear God, what wouldn't I give?

"You see, I had set you so very high,

as all your world did. You were not little like me, nor ungenerous, nor mean. The despicable jealousies that cramped my soul and made me hate myself you couldn't feel. From the heights of your splendid nature you reached down and lifted me to places where I could not climb. With that wonderful charm that captured all that knew you, you laid hold upon me and made me yours. Nobody ever before brought me closer to the things I want to be.

"Then—I found out. Oh, that I had never gone near those hateful chests! I wanted to do some small office for you—lay your things away where they would keep through the years; I would have liked some woman to do it for me.

"It was like taking your hand to lift the things upon which your touch lay; it was like a confidence between you and me to look upon the things you had treasured. There were some flowers wilted, under their dryness, as if from tears—and I cried, too, though I conjured up the scene in which Roy must have given them to you—along with his life. Ah, what if you should go on holding that life to the end!

"Then lower down under the clothes and the trinkets, I came—to the letters. I thought at first they were *yours* and *his*; so I tried not to let my touch rest upon them as I tied them all neatly together.

"Suddenly it came over me that none of the writing was his; just one hand throughout—yours. God is my judge that I wanted only another glimpse of you—I stopped to look, trying out of the lines to reconstruct you, when—they flashed forth their revelation—the naked secret of your soul!

"My heart stood still. I seemed to be buried in an avalanche of falling stones—the stones of the temple I had pulled down about my head. I don't know how long I crouched there, paralyzed.

"How, how could you do it—cheat the whole world—and *him*? You, upon whom from the hour of your birth God's finger lay, how could you perjure his immortal gift? For how much at the

last will you be held accountable, who robbed the world of so much good?"

(The next day.)

"We won't look at each other any more. You might plead for more—than I could give. You had your hour, and you chose to do with it as you did. You drained life to the last drop. Can you ask more? Wouldn't to do so be encroaching on another's lot? Then, you are dead, and nothing can ever matter any more with you; and I am alive, every atom of me, for so many eternal years to come.

"The living have rights over the dead; and you, who loved life so, wouldn't you serve it if you could? Why, you are only a memory, a dream. Shouldn't that weigh against fifty years of living hell? I can't bear the dregs any longer. My knees are tired from bending for the crumbs from the banquet. I am going to sit at the table, sit where you sat, and revel. I will come into my own. Love that has kept its distance will approach me now with arms outstretched. The gates of Paradise are thrown open, and there floats to me at last the intoxicating perfume and the song.

"For you will at last be dead! The quiet and the dust will close over you; the years will obliterate you, and even he will not remember that you lived!

"Where would he be most likely to see them first? Here, on the top, with the lid open. I'll put the picture back—for good. He can't miss the letters there; at the first glance he will know those terrible words—of yearning, of agony, of self-flagellation. That a woman should have written them!

"He will come that once—then never again. I am glad I shall not see him then. But when he comes back to me, it will be to stay, with nothing between us at last. I shall be first—first to the end!"

(Several days later. To the picture, which she has removed again from the chest.)

"He has seen them! I knew instantly by his face, by the glimpse I caught of it as he came down. He went out yesterday without speaking, with-

out looking at me—and he has not come back. All last night I waited and watched; and today I haven't drawn a breath that hasn't been pain. I came up here because I couldn't bear it. I must be near someone, and you are the only friend— Ah, I forgot; you can never be that any more.

"Will he ever come back? Does he, after reading through my treachery, want never to see me again? Love knows not the unpardonable, it is said. Perhaps to you he could forgive anything; to me—who sold you, as I did—nothing. I shall be alone, Woman in the Picture—alone through all the terrible years. Have a little pity, though I had none for you! Don't leave me to go mad!

"You were with him in that worst hour of his life. The time you were brought back to him dead beyond all hope could not compare with this. What did he do and think? If I dared look at you, I should know; but I am not fit. I betrayed him and you. On him, for my own selfish gain, I brought all this suffering; on you, shame—when the woman in me should have folded you in the mantle of her protection.

"I found out only yesterday how pitifully young you were—a child lost in the strange tracks of life and bewilderedly taking the wrong way. Ah, and who knows—who will ever know but that that hideous death was your attempt to rectify? Oh, that I should have dared to take upon myself the judgments of God!

"I will take the letters away and destroy them. No one shall ever see them again—they will do no more harm. What is it that I feel—you want me to look at you? In your eyes I see some strange thing. What would you have done with them? Can it be—am I reading aright—that you would wish them to go to *him*?

"So you still care! Sin, suffering, death, have made no difference? In all those far places you have traveled you have not forgotten? There is no end, then, to a woman's love? Thank you for that glimpse of immortality, that assurance of one thing that lasts beyond the grave.

"The yearning down under the sorrow of your eyes I understand now. From beyond the door of death there is still a message you wish to convey to him—some strange word that must pass from you to him. The letters, though he has read them once—and returned them for your peace of mind—these letters hold a sign that escaped him before?

"It is all I can do for you now. Who is he, and where? I must go through the letters once more—forgive me—and find the whole name. Ah, yes! He lived here once. I have heard Roy speak of him. He went away when you died. All this ruin—how did it touch his life? If I send for him and give him the letters, will it exorcise some of the grief and bring you peace?"

(Over a week later.)

"Oh, Woman in the Picture, I asked you to have pity before—what can I ask now that you will ever grant? Look down and know me for the lowest thing that ever lived. If tears could only count—but you are gone beyond them and all the reparation I can ever make.

"Listen to me—hear what I have to say, for I have seen *him*. Yesterday, in answer to the letter I sent him, he came. I was in the garden when he appeared, asking for me, and I knew at once that it was he, through some subtle relationship I can't explain, but it seemed as if whoever made him had you in mind at the time.

"I had cherished an anger against him as toward no other being; but when I saw his face I forgot and just felt sorry—sorry for him. It was as if a boy, gay and carelessly free, had been maimed at the outset of manhood—as though the wheels that crushed your body had passed through his heart.

"I took him into the house, telling him that I had something that I believed belonged to him—something I felt you wished him to have. A strange look crossed his face when I mentioned your name—a kind of listening look—as if he expected you to appear.

"I have never seen any living being

turn as white as he did when I placed the letters in his hands; and his fingers closed about them in a clasp I can never describe. I turned away. There could be no witness to this meeting, when from the separation of death you two spoke to each other again.

"He was very still for a long time. He seemed to be reading them all over again. Then—how shall I tell you?—but you know—he turned to me and said, 'Thank you,' over and over as one might offer a prayer. 'You don't know the hell you've lifted me from. From this day on I shall have something for which to wait. But how could you know?' he demanded. 'You never knew either of us. It took a woman of rare intuition, of—a wonderful sense of honor, to understand everything as it was and to give me this saving sign that she would never make when she was alive!'

"I stared at him while the truth, the terrible truth, broke over me like a cold sweat. 'You don't mean that you never saw them before,' I faltered—that you never knew?"

"'Never.' He looked at me blankly, caught my expression—and understood. 'I see,' he said—and the scathing contempt of his tone! 'So that is what you believed!'

"'I believed everything that the world always believes!' I cried wildly. 'Just the stupid, hideous interpretation it always puts on such things, I put. I wanted to believe—the *worst*. I wanted to get her out of my way. She stood in *my place*. Her personality overwhelmed mine. I was the shadow, she the reality. Nothing that I could do would win my own. Nowhere could I be first. My husband— Can't you understand, you who have loved without hope, without return—can't you understand the torture of it all? The letters were my salvation. They would give to me all that I craved. I left them where my husband must find them and read them. I put the ones that seemed the most condemnatory on top.'

"For a long, long time he looked at me in silence, as if he were trying to

comprehend how creatures like me could live. 'And you are a woman!' was all he said.

"He took from his pocket a frayed scrap of paper, so handled and worn it scarcely hung together, and thrust it under my eyes. 'In all her life she addressed herself to me but this once; perhaps you would care to see.'

"A few written words, an invitation to some function—how they burned into my soul! The bit of paper quivered under my eyes like living flesh—yours that I had torn from you.

"'You can't despise me as I despise myself,' I told him; 'and the worst is that I can never, never make amends. I sold the honor of a dead woman, knowing she could never defend herself, sold her to advance myself. Oh, the horrible sacrilege of it all!'

"The poor, poor letters! How they looked up at me—that bared heart that no one was ever meant to see! How you must have suffered! A vision flashed before me—you writing alone in the long, still nights when your trouble seemed more than you could bear, pouring out your secret soul as if he must hear and help, looking out at the stars and wondering if ever, on any of those worlds, you two would meet again.

"I broke into tears, the bitterest I have ever shed; and something in him must have softened toward me, for he began to tell me all about you, and I listened gladly to the praises of you that had been before so hard to bear.

"It was a sweet story—this little history of a woman so well beloved that her spirit will live forever among her friends. They all cared for you, but no one so much as he. He showed me things I had not known before, opened my eyes to the glory of a love that just by its existence makes all life better and clearer and that bridges death from the other side. I felt as if I had been ushered into some great temple that was the consecration of the immutability of human love; and there came to me as never before the certainty of God.

"Before he took the letters away—those fragments of your soul—he and I stood over them with bowed heads, as

they who watch the dead pass, and over this tragedy of silence mingled our tears. Tomorrow he will come and take *you*. It is over his hearth, after all, that you will live. His right has been established above all others. Even Roy agreed to this—for, you see, Roy has come back, and I have told him everything, and he has forgiven me—and oh, how glad I shall always be that he took

me after you had gone! Yet he could not have done it had he worshiped in that temple that you and *he* and I know.

"Good-bye, Woman in the Picture. We will not meet again—for a long time. *We are both returning to our own home.* But sometimes as you sit in *yours* bearing him company through the years, think that I, too, loved you, and thanked God that you had lived."



A FLOWER IN A LETTER

By Mabel Greenwood

OUT of it look your tender eyes at me,
 Poor faded page! Out of it violets grow,
 And lift their dewy petals tenderly
 Up to my downcast face from long ago.
 The scent of early spring is everywhere—
 And in my heart? An agony of care!

You wrote these words; your little hand lay, sweet,
 Upon this page, all watered by my tears.
 Solace and charm of loss! Oh, we shall meet;
 After the yearn of heart, the stretch of years,
 The pang, the hunger of a world of pain,
 A little sleep—oh, God, we meet again!

Up from it speak your voiceless lips tonight,
 Poor little flower! And laughing sun and day
 Seem come to banish all this dying light;
 Sickness and suffering seem so far away—
 Mourning seems gone, and even death seems brief—
 And in my soul? An emptiness of grief!

Keep it I must till I am sleeping, too,
 Till the long struggle fades, till the great Dawn
 Across the emerald woods that once we knew
 Takes from our parting rose the last sharp thorn.
 And then, amidst the sudden sheet of rain,
 The fainting mists of death—we meet again!

UP-TO-DATE ARITHMETIC

By Thomas L. Masson

THREE women buy puffs. One buys four puffs for ten dollars; the second buys eight for eighteen dollars, and the third one buys ten for twenty-seven dollars. Then all three go to a play and put their heads together. What is the net result?

Three young ladies are smoking cigarettes. In two hours two of them can smoke three times as many as one can in one hour, and the first one of the two smokes half again as many as the second. In three days they consume four hundred cigarettes. How many does each one smoke?

Ten jibes make twenty people mad, but of the ten jibes, each one delights five out of the ten who do not agree with it. What is the proportion of the madness to the gladness?

A society woman is reducing her weight. One roll on the floor takes off two ounces, while four cocktails a day and three desserts and two quarts of champagne add fourteen ounces. How many hours must she roll between meals to keep even?

A woman, beginning at twelve o'clock midnight, can deliver words to her husband at the rate of one hundred and seventy-five a minute, and for every half-hour later she can increase her speed at the rate of three words a minute. How many words will she deliver to him between two and two forty-five?

A father spends ten thousand dollars on his son's education, ten thousand on his clothes, two thousand on his cigarettes, two thousand on his drinks, ten thousand on his gambling and sixteen thousand on his automobiles. What is the total capacity of the boy at the age of twenty?



MAYBE "wandering in his mind" isn't as bad as it sounds; some people couldn't get far.



QUEER—when a man takes affront he usually gets his back up.

THE MAXIMS OF METHUSELAH

Regarding the Women of the Land of Nod

By Gelett Burgess

1 *Divers observations about women.* 6 *Three things women fear.* 8 *True love inqtricate*
11 *and full of moods.* 14 *Women's jealousy*
18 *and her appraisal of her rivals.* 22 *The*
Patriarch relates a parable of two women shew-
ing 30 *their various speech and manners.*
33 *Woman's sense of humor dependent upon*
her experience. 36 *Man to learn from women's*
guile 44 *to use his own wiles upon them.*
47 *Thin hair.*

TAKE heed that ye speak not to one woman concerning another: otherwise ye have no reward of the subtle,

2 But when thou goest amongst women, let not thy *left* girl know what thy *right* girl doeth.

3 My son, many a damsel is a kitten with men, who is a cat with women.

4 As one who foldeth a newspaper in a high wind, so is he who *argueth* with an angry woman.

5 As a high-necked damsel at a ball, so is love without danger: and a fair maiden without wit, she is as a cleaned pair of gloves, she lasteth but a day.

6 ¶ There be two times in a woman's life when she is afraid, yea, three when her heart faileth:

7 When she discovereth her first gray hair: when she meeteth her husband's old love, and when her babe is born, and she saith: Is the child *perfect*?

8 ¶ The damsel who hateth thee greeteth thee with soft words, saying:

9 Oh, I am so *glad* that thou art come, thou rejoicest mine eyes, behold, it was *sweet* of thee to call;

10 But she who loveth thee runneth, she holdeth thy hands, saying only: "Oh, *Ned!*"

11 ¶ For an unchanging affection is

pretended, it meaneth nothing: but true love hath moods and manners.

12 Now a maiden said unto me: Behold, *everyone* I have met today hath *stared* at me with their eyes, so that I was fain to enter and look in my mirror, lest a spot was upon my countenance. Yet there was no blemish on me!

13 And I laughed in my beard, thinking: Thou fool, thus wouldst thou advertise thy comeliness.

14 ¶ I have watched a wife when her husband talked with a witty woman, and I have regarded her ways.

15 For when the woman gazed admiringly at him, then did the wife care not, nay, she rejoiced with exceeding great joy, saying: Lo, how she *envieth* me.

16 But when *he* was delighted with the *woman*, when he looked at her in the corners of his eyes, when his lips smiled upon her, then was his wife angry; yea, she waxed exceeding wroth,

17 Yet to her husband did she say nought, she disclosed not her jealousy: but she took it out of the woman in subtle ways, yea, she drave her forth as with a tongue of fire. But her husband *knew* it not.

18 ¶ When one woman meeteth another, she weigheth her rival as in a balance, yea, she measureth her as with an ell:

19 And if peradventure she is found *wanting*, then is she welcomed with fond words, her path is made easy,

20 But if she *surpasseth* in charm, if her comeliness exceed, then doth it go hard with her, yea, she is treated with scorn.

21 For all women practise the same trade, and therein are no *Unions* found.

22 ¶ Now there were two damsels in the Land of Nod, and their names were Katharine and Trixie. They had been friends since their youth, yea, they slept in the same bed together.

23 And it came to pass that one day Katharine tarried in the parlor privily, when a youth came to call; and she heard him announced.

24 Therefore, before he had entered the room, she hid behind a screen, wishing to know wherefore he was in that house. And he knew not that she was there.

25 And lo, a damsel entered unto him, and they talked together, the youth and the damsel; and she beguiled him with honied words, she was *exceeding* gracious.

26 And when the youth had departed, Katharine came from behind the screen to discover the maiden; and behold, it was *Trixie*.

27 And Katharine was sore amazed, saying: What signifieth it that I have known thee lo, these many years, and I knew not thy voice? Behold, since my youth hast thou been my friend, and yet *I did not recognize thee!*

28 Thy ways were the ways of a stranger, and the tones of thy voice were *different* altogether.

29 And Trixie answered her, saying: Behold, was I not alone with a man, not knowing that a woman was near by? Lo, thou hast *much* to learn of women.

30 ¶ For there be two languages a woman speaketh, yea, *three* to which her tongue is accustomed:

31 The speech of women together: and the speech of a woman with a man: but the speech of a woman with *a man and a woman* is another language.

32 As a leaky hot water bottle in a time of need, so is a fond woman who telleth thy secrets; her folly exceedeth her comfort.

33 ¶ Because she knoweth not baseball, many a woman hath been accused of a lack of humor; and when she understandeth not business, then do men say Fie, fie, thou art a *fool*.

34 But when her husband is deceived

by a woman with three rats and a switch, when the *innocent* young damsel imposeth upon his credulity, then she laugheth full well; she maketh merry with him, saying:

35 Where now is thy sense of humor whereof thou hast boasted unto me! And how mighty is thy cunning wherein thou hast excelled? For lo, *any* woman can fool thee: thou art but a *man*.

36 ¶ My son, observe the guile of women and be not deceived: learn her ways and be wise,

37 For thou knowest not that when thou callest her entrance hath been rehearsed and the lights of the room arranged,

38 And as for the accident that lendeth her charm, lo, it hath been oft practised in the parlor.

39 Now on a time I flirted with a maiden at a picnic, and as we talked together, lo, her hair fell from her head, yea, it streamed down wondrously upon her shoulders, and many were the curls thereof.

40 And she became ashamed: she begged my pardon, saying: Lo, I can *never* keep my hair up; what shalt thou think of me?

41 But I answered, saying: Nay, bind it not up; leave it thus, for it well becometh thee!

42 And the other women smiled bitterly one at another; their look was the look of one who drinketh water after eating cranberries,

43 For I knew not that her hairpins had been loosened privily, and that thus did she with *every* man.

44 ¶ So, when thou hast neglected a damsel, call not upon her till the wind riseth and the rains descend; yea, in the blizzard shalt thou make thy visit,

45 That she may say: Lo, surely he *must* desire to see me, that he hath ventured in this storm; yea, he loveth me well.

46 ¶ What is more disappointing than to find an interesting maid is called "Mrs.?" and for a comely damsel to be a *doctor*, I cannot bear it.

47 ¶ Thin hair is an abomination to a woman, but a secret sorrow is her delight.

A ROAD ACTRESS

By Adele Luehrman

WITH the aid of a hairpin the leading woman of "The Man Higher Up" poked a tiny hole in the back "drop" and looked out at the audience. She turned her head quickly at the sound of a step nearby, but as the newcomer was an actor and not a stage carpenter with objections to patching scenery, she calmly resumed her survey of the inhabitants of East Liverpool, Ohio.

The actor stopped and watched her. He was James Crosby, whose genial middle-aged face was rarely absent from Broadway, and it was only because his present manager was paying him something more than his usual large salary that the "road" was being favored with a sight of him.

"Well," he said at last, "what do you think of him?"

"Think of whom?" the leading woman asked without turning.

He passed the question with a grin. "He kept his opera glass on you during your entire scene with me."

"You didn't expect him to keep it on you, did you, Jim?"

"Did it in the scene with Callender, too."

"Did George notice it?"

"Don't see how he could help it—the man makes himself so conspicuous."

"It's the dress suit which makes him conspicuous—in that audience," she replied. "He must be English."

"He must be blind to need a glass in the first row."

"Looking for wrinkles under my make-up."

"Well, he didn't find any, Nellie. Let's have a look at him."

Helena Walcott stepped aside and

Crosby took her place. "Not at all bad," he said presently. "He does look English. Probably over here hunting investments."

"Probably over here hunting a job. Gets into his evening clothes once a month and dreams he's in dear old London." She yawned deeply and stretched her arms in a long, slow gesture of fatigue.

"Tired?" asked Crosby.

"Dead."

"The jumps have been pretty bad lately."

"Oh, it's not the jumps," she returned dejectedly. "The traveling has been hard, but I wouldn't mind that if I could see anything ahead—anything ahead." Her voice trailed off on a note of dull hopelessness.

"Cheer up, girlie," said the man sympathetically; "you're tired, that's all. Why, you've a bully future ahead of you; you're young and pretty and clever—"

"Yes, I know," she interposed wearily. "I've been young and pretty and clever for six years, and what good has it done me? I haven't starved, that's all. Soon I shall be only pretty and clever, then just clever; and what help is that to a woman in this business?"

"Oh, come; you've got a good part and you've made a hit in it."

"Yes, I've made a hit—all the way from Altoona, Pa., to East Liverpool, Ohio. It isn't the first good part I've had, and it isn't the first hit I've made—in East Liverpool. I'm quite a favorite here!" Then, dropping sarcasm, she turned on him passionately: "And yet I can act—I *can*—you know it, Jim!"

"Of course you can, my dear," he soothed her; "and if we go to New York you're made."

"New York!" she echoed bitterly. "I was fool enough to dream that when I signed. Now I know better. If there had been the slightest chance of this piece going into New York I should never have been engaged for the part—you know that. And even now that I've made good, Klugman wouldn't let me play it there. He wouldn't—you know he wouldn't! You remember what he said to me the opening night? He said I was all right—looked well, gave a good performance and all that—and then—to add the final drop to my cup of bliss, I suppose—he said I reminded him a little of Donna Du Bois. Think of it! Donna Du Bois, who is nothing but a clothes horse, a jeweler's window! He said 'Irene' was a regular Donna Du Bois part. And what did he mean by that? You know as well as I do that if 'The Man Higher Up' is ever done in New York she will play 'Irene', not I." "Nonsense, Nellie; she couldn't touch it."

"Of course she couldn't; but what difference does that make? Her name is known in New York. She's not a 'road actress'—like me."

Crosby shook his head. "'Irene' takes playing; red hair and handsome gowns aren't enough. If Klugman doesn't know it he'd find it out very soon. Anyway, I shouldn't worry if I were you; I see in the *Mirror* that Miss Du Bois has gone to Europe."

"With her latest millionaire, I suppose. That's how *she* gets New York engagements."

"Yes," the actor agreed in a quiet tone which belied the distress in his eyes, "that's one way."

"I'm almost ready to believe it's the only way, Jim; and if a girl doesn't think the game is worth the candle, she had better quit the game." She started across the stage, the train of her gown thrown over her arm, her lacy skirts held high above the dirt and splinters of the unswept floor. Crosby kept pace with her in silence, but they had not gone ten steps when she stopped.

"Do you know," she said with bitter earnestness, "if that man out there in front—or any man who could take care of me and give me a home—should ask me to marry him, I'd jump at the chance."

Crosby laughed. "Yes, you would! And you'd be back on Broadway hunting work inside of six months."

"I wouldn't—I wouldn't! I'm sick of acting!"

She turned away toward the stairs which led to the dressing rooms under the stage, and Crosby stood a moment looking after her. "Sick of acting!" he murmured, as a tender, amused smile touched his face. He caught her hand and pulled her back to the wings. "Come and watch this scene," he urged. "George is giving [a corking performance tonight."

She yielded to his pressure reluctantly. "He's a favorite here, too," she said with sullen irony, adding bitterly: "And he's been at it longer than I."

The scene in progress was one of intense dramatic force: individual honesty pitted against the concentrated power of a political ring; a scene to stir men's minds, not by the distraction it offered from their working day thoughts, but by its revelation of the larger issues which the details of business life habitually obscured. As Helena and Crosby stood listening the man suddenly looked up at the girl. All weariness seemed to have fallen from her. She stood motionless, her figure alert, her sensitive face responsive to every word, every mood of the actors. "Sick of acting!" Crosby repeated to himself, the gentle smile returning to his eyes.

"Listen," she whispered; "I love the way George reads those lines. He is a good actor, isn't he?"

Crosby assented heartily. "No tricks," he said. "That's why he has been slow in getting to the front—his method is too simple, too direct—but when he does, he'll stay there."

The girl frowned. "Yes, when he does," she sighed—"when!"

Again they were silent, listening; then he turned to her. "Nellie," he said, "if that chap out front, or someone

like him, should happen to offer the home and the rest—as you were saying just now—” He paused, met her eyes, then glanced out at the young leading man. “How about George?”

“We are not engaged.”

“He thinks so, doesn’t he?”

“No, no. I’ve never promised—he understands that. Of course he knows that I—like him. Oh, Jim, I know that he’s fine through and through—but—” She stopped and looked away.

“But—” he prompted. “What’s the ‘but,’ Nellie?”

“He’s an actor—that’s all.”

She turned sharply and walked off, and Crosby let her go. From her dressing room she heard the fall of the curtain, the faint round of applause, the shuffling feet of the men changing the scene, the strident notes of the meager orchestra. “This isn’t a one-night stand play,” she thought, “and it might go well in New York—in New York—” Mechanically she made her change for the coming act, then sat gazing dreamily into the mirror.

“Ready to be hooked, dearie?”

“Oh, Alice!” The girl started out of her reverie. “I forgot that I’m all undone. I seem to be wool gathering tonight.”

Miss Barrington fell to work upon the gaping dress. She played a blithe widow, with whom Crosby paired off in the last act, and was in her own person an attractive woman somewhat past forty. “Dreaming of your admirer in the front row?” she inquired laughingly.

“I actually believe I was,” Helena admitted; “or, no I wasn’t—exactly. I was thinking not of him so much as of what he stands for—of a different kind of life. Lots of girls on the stage have made good marriages—men have seen them from the front and fallen in love with them; why shouldn’t it happen to me?”

“Marry and leave the stage—you?”

“Why not?” Helena demanded irritably. “I’m sure my inducements to remain on it are not what anyone would call irresistible. I’d marry in a minute if I got the chance—off the stage. Oh, you’d see!” she added defiantly in

answer to Miss Barrington’s incredulous eyes.

There was a knock at the door.

“Come in,” she called listlessly. The door was opened by an usher. “Note for you, miss,” he said. “There’s an answer, the gent said; I’ll take it.”

“Very well; wait.” She closed the door quickly, wheeled about and faced her friend. Her eyes glowed with sudden excitement; the hand which held the note trembled. She tore open the envelope, pulled out a slip of paper and rapidly read its contents. For a moment longer she stared at it; then she laughed a short, hard laugh, crushed the paper in one hand and with the other jerked open the door. “There’s no answer.”

“But the gent said—”

“There’s no answer,” she repeated sharply and closed the door. “Read it!” she cried, holding out the crumpled sheet.

With amazed eyes, Miss Barrington took the paper and read:

DEAR MISS—

you are the greatest actress I ever seen. would be pleased to take you out to supper meet me at the corner.

There was no signature. The woman stared at the girl blankly. “It can’t be the man in the front row,” she faltered.

“You never can tell,” said the girl savagely, flinging the note into a corner.

It was nearly midnight when she stopped at Miss Barrington’s dressing room after the performance. “I’m not going to wait,” she called; “the hotel is so near—and I’m tired.”

She climbed the stairs to the stage and picked her way across it among the furniture and scenery to the outer door, then through the dark alley to the street. She stopped at the corner, doubtful for a moment which way the hotel lay. The lights in front of the theater were out; the audience had dispersed. There was no one in sight except a man leaning against a lamppost. As she came within the radius of the light he started forward and raised his hat. “Good evening,” he said.

She walked on without a sign that she had either seen or heard him. The incident was not an uncommon one in her

experience, hardly uncommon enough to rouse her from her moody thoughts. But the man advanced and fell into step with her.

"You didn't answer my note," he ventured next.

So entirely had she dismissed from her mind the note she had received earlier in the evening that she had not thought of connecting it with the man who accosted her. At his words she turned and looked at him, prudent habit giving way to sudden, impelling curiosity. His overcoat was open, and she saw that he was not in evening dress. At any rate, that dreadful note had not come from the man with the opera glass, she thought, unconsciously cheered by the assurance.

"You needn't be so proud and haughty," the man at her side muttered sullenly, as she looked away again. "I'm no rube! I took the leading lady of 'The Jolly Grass Widows' out to supper last week—and I opened champagne." He paused as though to allow this announcement to pierce her disdain. "Now I guess you're sorry," he finished, and an upward inflection hinted that if she were he might be induced to forgive and forget.

Torn between a desire to laugh and an inclination to weep with sheer disgust and weariness, she hurried on and was thankful to reach the hotel without having suffered any further importunities. Stopping at the office for her key, she encountered Lucas, the traveling manager of the company.

"Someone inquired about you to-night," he informed her. "Wanted to know if you were English—said you looked like a girl he knew in London—asked if you had ever played there—wanted to know if Walcott was your real name."

"He didn't mention his real name, I suppose?"

"No, but some people who passed when we were talking called him 'Captain.' He was in evening clothes—looked quite a swell. I told him you were an American and I didn't think you had ever played in London—you haven't, have you?"

"No, not yet. Good night." So, she thought with a chill of disappointment, she had reminded him of someone else—that was all.

Her room as she entered it struck her as cold and utterly desolate, and she stopped a moment at the door and looked about. She was in a pitiless mood toward herself, determined to see things for once as they were, bitterly conscious that it was her habit to gloss over the bare and inadequate facts of her daily life. What she saw now was a worn suitcase on a chair, open and half unpacked, a few indispensable toilet articles spread out on a common red-bordered towel which served as a dresser scarf, a cheap umbrella in a corner—nowhere a warming touch of anything intimate or personal.

She took off her coat and hat, and turning the key of the gas stove on which the room depended for heat, she opened the door and threw in a lighted match. She could at least be warm, she thought. There was no responsive blaze, and she knelt to make an examination. As she did so a wide flame swept out and up into her face, then instantly receded. Involuntarily she fell back before it and remained huddled on the floor, her hands over her face, trembling with terror. She had seen the flame, had heard the sound of burning hair; but since that one instant her nerves, paralyzed by fear, had registered no sensation. She did not know whether she was burned or not; she felt nothing.

A knock at the door, followed after a short pause by a louder one, forced her to a mental effort. "Who is it?" she moaned.

"It's I. Aren't you coming down to have supper?" The voice was Candler's.

"I can't—I can't; I've burned myself!" she wailed aloud.

The door was thrown open and the young man strode in. "Burned!" he cried in alarm. "Where? How?"

"I was lighting the stove—the flames burst out at me." She shuddered.

"Good God!" He pulled her hands from her face and looked her over

quickly. "You don't seem to be burned," he said, relieved.

"I heard my hair sizzle and it scared me." She laughed nervously as he helped her to her feet.

"What's the matter?" he asked, surprised. "Why do you laugh?"

"I—I thought of something so f—funny. A man stopped me tonight—wanted to take me to supper—said he took the leading lady of 'The Jolly Grass Widows' last week—said he was no r—rube." She laughed hysterically.

"The blackguard!"

"But it was f—funny—you know it w—was f—funny." The last word was a sob.

Callender put out his arms to draw her to him. "Dear, why will you go home alone and expose yourself to such things?" he said.

She looked up into his face, into the tender, reproachful eyes, felt his outstretched arms ready to shelter, protect, caress—and like a tired, troubled child she walked into them and fell to sobbing against his sleeve.

"Poor little girl! Poor, tired little girl!"

She felt his lips on her cheek and tried to draw away from him, but he held her.

"Sweetheart," he whispered, "why won't you marry me and let me take care of you? There are so many things I could do for you that I can't do as it is—you understand that."

She freed herself. "Yes," she said; "you ought not to be here now."

"I know, but you frightened me. I thought from your voice that something dreadful had happened. Don't you see," he pleaded again, "that's just it! If we were married I could be with you all the time."

"We've gone over that so often," she said, turning away.

"I know," he answered gently; "and I won't worry you about it any more tonight. Come and have something to eat. Alice and Jim are waiting."

"I don't want anything."

He stood a moment in silence, his troubled eyes on her pale, listless face. "I don't think you are well, Nellie," he said finally; "you haven't been like yourself for days."

"Oh, I'm all right, but you mustn't stay here any longer—please."

"I'm going. Sure you won't come down?" She shook her head. "Then I'll send you up something. I'm afraid there isn't much choice—sandwiches and coffee, perhaps—or would you like milk, hot milk? That will make you sleep."

She put her hand on his shoulder and smiled up contritely. "You're a dear, George, and I'm a sulky beast. But let it be cold milk; I sha'n't need anything to make me sleep tonight."

As Callender approached the table at which Crosby and Miss Barrington were seated, he saw Lucas just leaving it. "I told him she was an American," he heard the manager say.

"Lucas was saying that that chap with the opera glass asked about Nellie—thought he had seen her in London," Crosby explained. "Isn't she coming down?"

"No—I've ordered something sent up. She came near being burned lighting her gas stove. Oh," he reassured them, "there was no harm done. Of course it frightened her. She's nervous and all tired out."

"I'm going up," Miss Barrington announced, rising. "She ought to see a doctor; she needs a tonic. Send up my supper," she added, departing.

"Alice is right," said Crosby. "Nellie does need a tonic but not drugs. She needs a little of the great tonic—the greatest in the world—success. Unfortunately, it isn't for sale in bottles."

A waiter served them, and they proceeded with their food for a while without conversation; then Callender said, frowning with annoyance: "She was spoken to again going home tonight. I wish she wouldn't go alone, but she is dressed and out of the theater before I'm half packed."

"Spoken to? It wasn't the man with the opera glass, was it?" Crosby questioned with interest. "I thought he seemed rather too decent for that sort of thing."

Callender gave a shrug. "You never can tell," he said, and lapsed once more into silence.

"You ought to marry her," said Crosby after a pause.

"I wish to heaven I could, but—" A sigh completed the sentence.

"Make her," said Crosby.

"I can't, old man—I can't even try; I'm not sure that it would be fair to her to marry her. I'm not sure that she wouldn't be better off out of this business, married to a man who could give her a home—a real home. I've been eight years learning this profession, and what I've learned wouldn't help me in any other; but if I thought I could make a go of it at anything else—"

"My dear boy," Crosby stopped him, "you are talking utter rot; you've a fine future—so has she. I know the sort of thing she has been saying lately—I heard it again tonight: sick of the stage—would jump at a chance to marry and leave it—" He paused and looked thoughtfully over at the young man. "George," he said slowly, "why don't you find out if she really would—jump?"

"Find out—how?"

"There are lots of ways," Crosby answered. "For one, write to her and pretend you are the man she prates about who can give her a home and take her off the stage. Why not?" as Callender frowned with distaste. "Just to convince yourself—and her. I don't think you are any more uncertain of her state of mind than she is herself."

"I couldn't do a thing like that," said Callender. "I'm surprised at your suggesting it—if you are serious. She would never forgive me."

"My dear fellow, she wouldn't know—don't you see? There are a dozen ways of managing it. For instance, you—" Crosby had bent forward eagerly as he spoke, his eyes laughing with mischief, but he stopped suddenly and puffed several times at his cigar, then leaned back, his expression quite serious again. "No," he said in a tone of finality, "I dare say you are right—it wouldn't do."

"Of course not," said Callender with decision. "Still I should like to know," he added regretfully. "I should like to be sure that I'd not be doing her an injustice by tying her to this life with its

hardships, its uncertainties, its disappointments—"

"And its successes," Crosby finished; "don't forget those."

"She and I haven't any to remember, Jim."

"They'll come—and this season—unless I'm very wrong."

"You mean— Have you heard anything?" Callender demanded eagerly.

"No—nothing new. But the straws are pointing toward New York. 'The Man Higher Up' is a big town play. The problem involved is the problem of the city, not of the small town."

"Of course," Callender agreed, disappointed. "That's obvious; we've all seen that from the start."

"Then Klugman sees it. If so, why don't we play the big towns? We've avoided them as if they were quarantined. Why? Because Klugman is saving them until after the New York run. Another thing you may have noticed: we haven't been more than twenty-four hours distant from New York, and Lucas never knows two weeks ahead where we are going."

"That's true. We have been jumping about Ohio like fleas."

Crosby smiled shrewdly. "We are killing time," he said, "until Klugman gets the theater he wants. He expects a success and wants an uninterrupted run."

"Well, please God he gets it!" prayed Callender fervently.

"Of course," Crosby added in a lighter tone, "I may be wrong. The ways of Providence and the theatrical manager are inscrutable." He glanced across the room. "I see Sambo asleep over there; I guess he'd like to get rid of us and go to bed. Shall we adjourn to the office?"

"I'm going to turn in," said Callender. "Sleep when you can is the safest rule I know. Not going up yet?" he asked as Crosby lingered.

"No," said Crosby; "I think I'll finish my cigar here."

Two days later, in another small Ohio town, on her way to the theater to get her mail, Helena met Callender and Crosby returning with it. She fell into

step between them as Crosby handed her two letters. One of these she dropped into her bag after a glance at it; the other she opened and read—then re-read. "What do you think of this?" she asked, passing the letter to Crosby with a little puzzled laugh.

"Shall I read it aloud?" he asked, and at her nod, he read:

"MY DEAR MISS WALCOTT,

"May I begin by asking you to read this to the end without passing judgment on the way? It is the first time I have ever addressed a personal communication to a lady to whom I am unknown, and my strongest feeling at the moment is fear—fear that the mere act in itself should be an affront to you, fear that I may not be able to make quite clear what is in my mind and heart.

"When you came upon the stage last night it was as though for a moment I was a boy again. It was spring—in England—and the hedgerows were in blossom—the countryside one great garden. And out of the fragrance and color of the memory there came to me the face of a child—a child called Amy. That is all I remember—just Amy. Does the name mean anything to you, I wonder? Could it be, I asked myself again and again as I watched you, that you were Amy? Was it your hair, your eyes, your smile that had evoked the picture? I don't know—I don't care. As the evening wore away the child face faded, until now it is quite gone. Only yours remains.

"What shall I say of your acting? Beautiful? Wonderful? I know it is all that, but I also know the hold your profession has on those who follow it; and knowing it, I wish that you were not an actress. I wish that you were just a girl—just little Amy grown into a woman and waiting for me now in England. Some day we shall meet—when I have found a way."

"Too flowery," was Crosby's comment as he finished.

"Decidedly," agreed Callender.

"I think it's beautiful," said the girl.

"An anonymous letter!" protested Callender.

"Oh, no," said Crosby; "an impersonal tribute."

"Impersonal!"

"Well, he doesn't ask me to answer it."

"Oh, this is only the beginning."

"Let her alone, George," advised Crosby; "she likes it—she actually likes it! My boy, you have a rival. You'll have to take your pen in hand."

"Prose poems are not in my line," said Callender drily.

"I think you are perfectly horrid—

both of you. Of course I like it! It's complimentary, and certainly respectful and modest enough."

"Modest!" exclaimed Callender. "Why, he coolly announces that he intends to make your acquaintance as soon as it suits his convenience, and he wishes you were waiting for him now!"

"I wonder what he means by 'found a way'?" she mused.

"Wants to be properly introduced," said Crosby. "Where is the letter from?"

"East Liverpool."

"May be the man Lucas spoke of the other night who asked if you were English," suggested Callender.

"That's so," said Crosby—"the chap with the opera glass; he looked English. Was that East Liverpool?"

Helena nodded. "Mr. Lucas said he looked quite distinguished; said people passing called him 'Captain.' Captain what, I wonder?"

"Of course you wonder; he knew you would," said Crosby; "that's his game."

"He may be an officer in the British army," said Helena.

"And a scion of the English aristocracy," added Callender.

"I wonder if he has any money?" said Crosby.

"Of course not," said Callender; "poets never do."

"Neither do actors," retorted the girl.

Other letters came. Each week brought one, sometimes two. They were all much alike, all unsigned and all variations on the one theme: the deep impression she had made upon him. Between the letters came flowers, candy, books—sometimes without a word, sometimes accompanied by a short note, but always without the sender's name. Only once did he touch upon the point of his concealed identity.

"It is not an easy thing," Helena read aloud one day, from a letter her friends had brought her, "for me to let my letters go to you unsigned; but if I send my name I cannot send my thoughts—my dreams."

"A—ha!" scoffed Crosby. "The valiant Captain is afraid of a breach of

promise suit. If you knew his name the flow of soul would cease."

The girl flushed with annoyance, and folding the letter she put it in her bag.

"Is that all?" asked Callender.

"It's all for you."

"Now what have we done?"

"Nothing," she answered quietly; "only I don't think it's quite fair of me to let you read these letters. You wouldn't like it if you had written them. And although we don't know who the man is, he is evidently sincere. I'm sorry now that I ever let you read any of them; but somehow at first they didn't seem personal or real—not as if they had been written by an actual man."

"Do they seem so now?" Callender asked.

She caught a note of challenge in the question, but although she colored, she met his eyes squarely. "Yes," she said, "they do."

Callender reverted to the incident later when he and Crosby were alone. "How is this thing going to end?" he asked.

Crosby looked up sharply, his attention caught by a note of dejection. "You're not worrying about it, George?" he questioned earnestly.

"I think," Callender replied slowly, "she has become interested—no longer merely amused and curious. You heard what she said."

"Nonsense! She doesn't give the man a thought between letters."

"She's interested, I tell you," Callender insisted. "That's his scheme, don't you see—to puzzle her, excite her imagination—then at the psychological moment enter and sweep everything before him."

"Ah! So you think he has a serious purpose? Now, I have an idea he's just amusing himself."

"*Amusing himself!* A man doesn't besiege a girl for weeks—spending time and money—for fun! Where would the fun come in?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Crosby. "At any rate he hasn't spent much money. Twenty-five dollars would more than cover his outlay."

"What of that?" retorted Callender

impatiently. "A man expects a return when he spends twenty-five cents. He has a reason for parting with it, even if he gives it away. Oh, I think he's decent enough—in a way," he conceded grudgingly. "I think he wants to marry her."

"My dear boy," Crosby exclaimed, "because you happen to want to—" He stopped abruptly. "Do you really think he'd have a chance with her?" he asked. "A man she knows nothing about!"

"I think what he would offer would have a chance," Callender replied. "What he stands for—that's my rival—not the man himself."

"And what you stand for—the stage—how about that?"

The young man only gestured despairingly.

"George, will you bet on it?" Crosby demanded.

"On what?"

"That if it comes to a showdown you and the stage will win against this man and—the sheltered life. I'll back you."

"Don't want to bet."

"Why not? You're foolish," urged Crosby; "you'd win either way. Oh, come on, just to oblige a friend; I need the money."

Callender laughed. "How much do you need?"

"Well—say twenty-five."

"All right," said Callender indifferently. "I hope you win it."

Although Helena had spoken impulsively, irritated by Crosby's jest, back of her words there really lay, as Callender feared, more than momentary annoyance. But she was by no means prepared for the change of attitude her announcement brought on the part of her friends. As one of the men always went for her mail, they knew as before when letters from the unknown "Captain" arrived, but they never referred to them. Then she began to notice that she was seeing less and less of Callender. On the train, instead of dropping into the seat beside her for a chat as had been his habit, he now traveled in the smoking car, where Crosby bore him company. The "Cap-

tain's" books, which had gone into her trunk unread for want of time, were called into service for the long journeys, for even Miss Barrington seemed to be avoiding her. They all appeared to look upon the matter as settled, her future decided, her stage career nearing its end. There were no specific words to that effect upon which she could lay an irritated finger, but that was what their collective demeanor silently conveyed.

There were many days, however, when she willingly allowed her own thoughts to drift with the current, when, tired and discouraged, the prospect of escape from her present life was powerfully alluring. During one of these moods, seated in the train, which, already hours late, was slowly plowing its heavy way through a snowstorm, she stared out at the white, unending fields and considered her immediate future. A late arrival—no dinner—no sleep until long after midnight—early start—train late—long wait in a cold station. With a tug of desperation she jerked open her suitcase and took refuge in a book, the "Captain's" latest gift.

The title, "English Gardens," was subtly suggestive of his first letter and the beginning of his interest in her. She turned the pages slowly, stopping for the illustrations. These were finely tinted photographs of private gardens in England, showing now and then a wing of manor house or castle. She had never seen the reality which they reflected; the nearest approach had been the scenery of English plays. The back drop curtain had sometimes disclosed a stately garden with the turrets of a castle rising among the trees. Just charming pictures these photographs were to her. To him, she knew, they stood for something real. Some such scene, no doubt, had risen in his memory when she had come upon the stage that night, as background for the child's face which her own had recalled; it was to some such place perhaps that he wished to take her.

Take her! Instantly she saw herself in the new and wonderful surroundings

—yielded her mind to the joy of it. She heard the swish of her summer gown as she moved down the path of a rose garden, caught the sweep of her lace scarf as she sank upon a stone bench under a lilac arbor. A quaint sundial held the center of another picture, and here she saw herself, slim and girlish, following for a moment the moving shadow. Unconsciously her thoughts found words: "Now is the sun upon the highmost hill of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve is three—" She broke off guiltily. Juliet in the garden scene! So that was all it meant to her—this loveliness! However real it was to others—to him, to her it was just scenery for plays. She had been out front looking at the back "drop." Again reality surged in: the tired, restless people in the car, the white cold without, the strange, dreary theater ahead.

The snowstorm dogged the company's steps for days, doubling by the uncertainty of trains the ordinary inconveniences of their wandering life. As loss of sleep accumulated and weariness increased, her thought turned more and more to the prospect of permanent relief. She read and re-read her packet of unsigned letters. To Callender, eager to do for her such little things as one could do to lessen unavoidable discomfort, she often returned only a curt acknowledgment, then later cried into his overcoat, which served her as a pillow on a night journey in a day coach, because she knew that down the aisle his own head rested on a hard suitcase.

One evening, on entering the theater, Crosby stopped at the mail box and glanced through the letters it contained; then he looked up at the call board. "More dates," he said as he saw the heading: "The Man Higher Up Co. Route Continued." He took out his notebook and fountain pen. "Nov. 30th, Easton, Pa.," he read; "Dec. 1st, Trenton, N. J.; Dec. 3d indefinite, Metropole Theater—" He stared at the next words an instant, then wheeled and called to the carpenter:

"Has Miss Walcott come in yet?"

"Think not, sir; haven't seen her."

He hurried to his dressing room, but

was back copying the new dates in his notebook when a few minutes later Callender bore down upon him with a shout: "Heard the news? New York in two weeks!"

He nodded and was about to speak, when the stage door opened and Helena and Miss Barrington entered. Callender started toward them, the wonderful news on his lips, but Crosby clutched his arm. "Wait," he said.

"Any mail for me?" Helena inquired.

Crosby took a letter from the box and gave it to her. At sight of the handwriting she flushed, but she raised her hand with apparent indifference for a hairpin and inserted it in a corner of the envelope, which she began to rip open as she looked up at the call board.

"More dates," she murmured; then suddenly a tremor ran through her body, her hands closed convulsively, then opened limply and the letter which they held fell unheeded to the floor. Miss Barrington, also intent upon the notice, did not see, and neither of the watching men moved to pick up the letter.

"Oh, dearie!" Miss Barrington gasped. "New York—the Metropole!"

Helena raised a trembling hand to her eyes. "Is it really there?" she asked unsteadily.

"Yes," said Crosby gently.

"Any—changes in the—cast?" she faltered.

"No changes, Lucas says," Callender answered.

She swayed dizzily, then took a lurching step toward Callender, her hand out. "I feel so queer," she said with a nervous laugh. "I believe I'm going to faint."

Callender put a steadying arm around her.

"Oh, George!" she stammered weakly. "New York—and *together!*"

Then they moved off toward the dressing rooms talking excitedly, Callender imparting to the two women the details he had heard from Lucas. Crosby lingered, looking down at the letter still lying on the floor. It bore a dusty heel mark where Helena's foot had struck it as she started toward Callender. He picked it up, flicked off the dust and put it in his pocket. Then he turned over the leaves of his notebook to a page containing a column of figures. These he contemplated in silence for a few minutes, after which he closed the book with a short, low chuckle of content.

"I just about break even," he said to himself, "with a little fun to the good."



NEIGES D'ANTAN

By Rosalie Arthur

DOWN the lane that has no turning,
Under drifting orchard snow,
Fared my Youth with backward glances
Long ago.

Gone is all the bloom of springtime,
Winter snows are on my head—
Can it be in some far country
Youth is dead?

THE NEW COMMISSIONER

By James Alvin

RUTH DODSON was sent to the Northern college for the usual finish, but the culture went deeper. Her education "took." After graduation she spent several weeks with two of her classmates in settlements where she encountered the problems of "the other half." She found illuminating experiences, not least of which was the oneness of humankind in the essentials of life. She found, too, that in the humbler spheres the love of combat was strong, and the effort to win out by any means lent a humorous fascination to the whole scheme of existence.

So, when she returned home she was something more than the young lady of the aristocracy up on the big hill. She had ideas and aspirations that made her handsome old father fairly gasp. She began to take part in movements. She ventured suggestions on sanitation and fresh-air undertakings, and caused very respectable old boards and commissions that had been asleep for years to sit up and rub their eyes. In the midst of it all she received a polite request from the new political boss that he would be pleased to call on her to discuss a matter of public moment if she would kindly consent to receive him.

"My dear Ruth," declared Colonel Dodson, "this will never do. You cannot mean that you would even think of seeing this—this person?"

She placed her hand gently on his gray head and smiled.

"Really, dear father, it is not serious—and I am dying with curiosity to hear what he wants. Then, you know, in these times a woman who does not take an interest in things is hopelessly archaic. She might just as well go to

China and bind her feet or become a Mohammedan and wear a veil."

"You don't mean—you cannot mean—you are going to—"

"Why not?"

"It is incredible—preposterous!"

"But that is not even a woman's reason."

"My dear child," he said, reaching for her hand, "you are the loveliest woman in the world, but you do not understand. Don't you know that this same Dan Douglas and his crowd are going to put a miserable saloon at the entrance to Mount Place, and are going to begin the degradation and commercialization and ruin of this neighborhood?"

"Yes," she said.

"Think a moment. Here is your home and my home—the home your mother made glorious and sacred—threatened by the vandals and worse than barbarians."

He spread forth both hands in appeal. "Need I say more?" he asked.

She patted him gently on the head and kissed him fondly. "Dear old dad!" she said.

II

DAN DOUGLAS was not a great boss, but he was bold and he had good humor; and in him was the native genius that groped after actions which would impress the mass and produce results.

So Dan Douglas called, and she received him graciously.

"Miss Dodson," he said, with a smile, "I know you think I've got a nerve to come up here when your people are fighting me, but it's a kind of public duty that made me write and want to talk certain things over with you."

"I shall be glad to hear you," she replied.

"Thank you," he said, "and I'll be as plain and as short as I can. Since they put me at the head of the party here I've seen a few things. Most organizations like ours go to pieces on fool mistakes, and one of these mistakes is to monkey with the public schools. Now I don't care how high or low people get, or what race they belong to or what church they go to, it is a rule that they want good schools for the youngsters, and they're not a-goin' to stand politics in the schools for long. That's the general proposition. A politician who thinks he can manage school teachers is dealin' in a brand of brains that's a persimmon above his pole. He's out of his class. So, you see, first, the game's against him, even if he could play it, and second, he don't know the cards."

He paused, then resumed: "I'm puttin' this rough so you can see it from my side of the fence—considerin' it as a matter of practical politics. Now about the people. Give 'em good schools and keep politics out and they'll stand a whole lot of things. If you've got a cook who makes good bread and fries the beefsteak right, you'll excuse some of the fancies. I tell you all this because I'm comin' to a pretty big favor, and I don't want to get there with any false pretenses."

She leaned forward a bit, drawn by her curiosity. "It is very interesting," she said. "Please go on."

"I'm for good schools all the time, but please understand right here and now I'm for good schools because it's good politics."

"I think I see," she said.

"Well, I read about you takin' an interest in big things goin' on. You stand for just about the best there is among all women of this city. They come to you for your name. What you lead in will get the confidence of everybody."

She was puzzled and she waited for him.

"Maybe you know we've a new school law," he said. "A new board is to be appointed; and what I'm here for is to tell you that you'll be a member of it."

"I?" she gasped. "It's impossible, utterly impossible!"

"Oh, no, not at all. It's a service you owe to this city; and it's something you're going to do because you'll see that you can use your influence for these people who need it. You up here on the hill don't realize that we down there can't come up to you, because you don't do your part in helping us. It won't hurt you to come down for a little while, to kind o' make us feel that there is something in the idea that all human beings are made of the same material, and that even in common people there's a wish to do a little better and to be a little better. Now, as I see it, these schoolhouses are just the places that need this sort of attention, and as you seem to be interested in reforms and such, here's your chance to do a mighty big work."

"But, Mr. Douglas, I tell you it is out of the question. First, you must consider that my father and all related to me are fighting you bitterly, and are unalterably opposed to you and your party."

"That's all right," he replied; "it won't make any difference. I asked for this talk to tell you on my honor if you'll go on the board no politician will bother you, interfere with you or do anything to hinder your work. I know I can't expect your answer today, but here, I brought you a copy of the new law and somethin' that will show you what you'll be expected to do; I'm goin' to leave it with you and you can let me know later when it will be convenient for you to take the office."

She shook her head, but at the same time she accepted the papers. Dan Douglas rose, a sturdy figure, with all the vitality of youth and health, a splendid young animal in the flush of life. And she looked upon him with unconscious admiration.

Suddenly a thought came to her, and smiling as if inviting his interest and favor, she asked:

"If I should take it, would you agree not to put that saloon at the entrance to Mount Place?"

"Now, now," laughed Dan, raising

both hands in protest, "that would be a trade; and it's no politics in this school business. That's why I asked you to be a commissioner. No trades—no bargains—nothin' but straight goods. The proposition must stand on its own merits. What's more, Miss Dodson, that license is a party promise, and it's got to go through."

III

"As Dan Douglas said, those people down there expect us up here to help—and I am going to help."

After a night of consideration—after a thorough perusal of the new school law—after seeing it all and thinking it all over—Ruth gave her decision to her father; and he found that the English tongue could not politely interpret the emotions that surged within him.

Ruth soon appreciated the compelling cause of Dan Douglas's action. An election was impending and her appointment, which proved tremendously popular, did its share in allaying public apprehension in regard to the new school management.

In two weeks the campaign opened. It sizzled from the start. The whole city sat up in prospect of the finest contest it had known in a generation. So keen was the expectation, so universal the interest, that the new school board became a forgotten sensation, and the five commissioners were happy in the good fortune of being able to go on with their work without top lines in the newspapers. The commissioners were a college president, a successful lawyer, a capitalist, a leading business man—prominent citizens of unimpeachable standing—and Miss Ruth Dodson, all serving for honor and without pay.

The new law gave them practically autocratic power, and they delved into their labors with zeal. After the beginnings had been laid out and made, the president had his college, the lawyer his practice, the capitalist his money and the business man his business. Ruth Dodson alone was free. She became the evangel of the new school dispensation. In her automobile she visited the

schoolhouses, spent days in hard work gathering facts, seeking improvements, enlisting the interests of teachers and pupils and ever preaching the gospel of fresh air and more fresh air. The four commissioners at first had bowed with polite deference to a society queen; now they were following in the footsteps of a practical woman immensely immersed in a great public service. And the courtly president achieved a stock phrase in calling the session to order: "Gentlemen, we meet again to hear what Miss Dodson would have us do." And they usually did it.

This new experience was delightful to her. The trust and appreciation, the admiration and praise were pæans to her soul. "Today," she exclaimed to her father, "I captured riches beyond millions and jewels—the smiles of a roomful of strange children."

IV

THE election passed and Dan Douglas lay back contemplating his victory and patting his vanity. He had done well. Politicians called him wonderful, and he waved aside their flattery only to hug it silently to his soul of souls.

A letter came. It was from Miss Ruth Dodson, asking him to call. He could not repress a laugh. "That was the nerviest thing I ever did," he chuckled to himself, "and now I guess she's going to tell me what she thinks of me. All right, all right—it's all in the game."

But the kind of reception he expected did not come to pass. She received him pleasantly, congratulated him on his success and thanked him for keeping his promise about the schools.

"Now," she added, "I must ask you to find a new commissioner."

"I know you think I played a trick on you," replied the boss apologetically, "and in a way I did; but, honestly, I'd like you to keep right on. Of course there's a heap of difference after election, but in this case I feel that it's all right—"

"I fear you do not quite understand."

"And I thought—they told me—you were enjoying the work," he continued.

"I never enjoyed anything more," she said; "it has done me countless good. But—well, you see, Mr. Douglas, you never understood why I changed my mind about taking the place; and even my father never saw why I wanted it so much. You may recall that we were greatly disturbed over the saloon. I read very carefully the new law, and I found something most interesting. So I took the place, and then you all got to fighting so hard that nobody had a thought outside of politics. The other commissioners were most kind, and they, too, became lost in the campaign. You know we simply had to have a new schoolhouse, and the building on the other corner of the entrance to Mount Place was available and desirable."

"Yes," said Douglas placidly when she smiled and paused.

"Well, the option was signed the night you were all so crazy closing your campaign."

"I don't quite follow you."

"You should read the new school law," she said. "It says: 'No new license shall be granted to a saloon within two hundred feet of a public school building'—and I think the street at that particular corner is less than one hundred feet wide. Now, Mr. Douglas, you know why I accepted your kind offer."

The boss gasped. Then the realization of the whole thing came on him so suddenly that he forgot his company manners.

"Well, if that don't beat—" he began, but Dan Douglas really tried to be a gentleman, and he never finished the sentence.



"SHOW him up," said the editor carelessly.

"Well, sir, had I better?" asked the office boy. "He says he wants to see you because you showed him up."



IT is easier to grind out epigrams than it is to think out solutions; hence the plethora of Shaws and the dearth of Maeterlincks.



THE man who is as good as his word often uses bad language.

WHEN THE YEARS WERE YOUNG

By Madison Cawein

THE turtle's egg by the shallow pool
Whitened a spot on the sandy gray;
And there by the log, where the shade greened cool,
The whippoorwill's nest on the brown moss lay.

I went by the path that we often went
When the years were young and our hearts were, too;
And the wind, that was warm with the wild rose scent,
Breathed on my eyes till I thought it you.

'Twas the old wild path where the horsemint grows,
And the milkweed's blossom makes musk the air;
And I plucked for your memory there a rose, -
As once I did for your throat and hair.

And I came to the bridge that is built of logs,
Where the creek laughs down like a dimpled child,
Where we used to hark to the mellow frogs
When the dusk sat dim in the ferny wild.

And I stood on the bridge and I heard your feet
Tremble its floor as I heard them when
I was a boy whom you ran to meet,
Bare of foot and of years just ten.

The old log bridge in the bramble lane,
Where the yellow daisies stare bright and large;
Where the teasel's tuft makes a thorny stain,
And the wild sunflower rays out its targe.

Where berries cluster their ripened red,
And under the bush on the creek's low bank
The bobwhite huddles an egg round bed,
The kingfisher flits and the crane stands lank.

Your small tanned hand again was laid
In the briar brown clasp of my freckled own;
And down from the bridge we went to wade
Where the turtle's egg by the water shone.

THE SMART SET

And again I heard the wood dove coo;
 And the scent of the woodland made me sad;
 For the two reminded my heart of you,
 When you were a girl and I was a lad.

It is not well for a man to go
 The old lost ways that he went when young,
 When Love walked with him, her eyes aglow,
 A blue sunbonnet beside her swung.

It is not well for woman or man
 To come again to the place they knew
 In the years that are gone, where their love began,
 The love that died as all things do.

It was not well for my heart, I know,
 On the old log bridge in the woodland there.
 Your eyes looked up from the creek below,
 And in every zephyr I felt your hair.

Your face smiled at me, your beauty yearned
 In every flower, or song I heard;
 No matter—wherever my eyes were turned
 You stood, remindful with look and word.

You laid your hand on my heart—your hand,
 Once light as a wisp and wild with joy;
 And my heart grew heavy, you understand,
 With the dreams that died with the girl and boy.

It was not well for my heart and me
 On the old log bridge in the woodland glen;
 For there I met with your memory—
 And the days that are gone come **not** again.



HE (*tenderly*)—Would you like some Welsh rabbit?
 SHE—No; I never cared for game of any kind.



IT is rumored that the hobble skirt is on its last legs.

MRS. BART'S BRIDGE DEBTS

By W. Carey Wonderly

“**A**ND who is that?” asked Rosie, craning her neck to catch a glimpse of the woman in the big red touring car.

The thick cloud of white dust following in the wake of the machine choked the landlady, and she set down the dish of strawberries and coughed behind her hand. Then she placed her hands on her hips and wagged her old gray head in the most alarming manner.

“Its Mrs. Bart—Mrs. Peter J. Bart, wife o’ Peter J. Bart, who made his millions out o’ headache pills,” she snapped. “No children, packs o’ dogs and ottymobeels to burn—and they generally do, too! And they do say as how she’d a puffict passion for bridge until Peter J. put his foot down on it. And right, say I! If he would only put a stop to her tearin’ around the country in that big red machine, chokin’ respectable folks to death— S’ more cream, mum? You, sir?”

Rosie smiled and thanked her and held out her thick china mug; Leighton shook his head.

“And where is Mrs. Bart going now?” asked Rosie as she ate her strawberries.

The woman leaned over and whispered the information in the most thrilling voice imaginable.

“To Pinelake, to play bridge,” she said.

“Ah-h!” cried Rosie.

She got up, and going to the front of the porch looked thoughtfully after the fast disappearing car. Then she reached up, broke off a spray of honeysuckle and tucked it in her belt.

“How interesting!” she observed, with a charming smile in the landlady’s direction.

“Yes’m.” The creature swelled with importance. Every day she watched Mrs. Bart fly past the little roadhouse in her big red touring car, for she was interested in Mrs. Bart. Most persons in Woodlawn County were.

“She was one o’ them Boston Parkers before Peter J. married her,” she volunteered, wrapping her hands in her apron and looking just across Rosie’s head. “Her pa had some money, and her Aunt Ruth Webb some more, but both o’ them put together not so much as Peter J. Bart. Some folks say that is why she married him. He’s older, you know. Them bridge parties she used to have over at Bartwood, before Peter J. put a stop to such carrying-on, must ‘a’ been terrible to her fam’ly. Her pa a deacon in the church, and her auntie the widder o’ a missionary! I tell you, my heart bled many a time for ‘em, knowin’ what I know. And now she goes flyin’ off to Pinelake to play cards, and her poor dear husband never dreamin’ o’ such a thing! It’s—it’s—scan’lous!”

“It is, indeed,” said Leighton slowly. He sent Rosie a quick, significant glance, and the girl nodded.

“It’s very sad,” she told the woman. Then she turned and spoke to the tall blue-eyed, handsome man. “Don’t you think we’d better be going, Tom?” she asked.

He got up and paid the landlady for their “tea”—a repast which she had never been guilty of serving before. Then he and Rosie went down the garden to the road where their hired automobile was waiting for them.

Neither of them spoke until they were out of sight of the roadhouse; then Rosie, all excitement, began.

"Don't you think that if we took a cottage at Pinelake Mrs. Bart could be induced to come to our house to play bridge?" she asked. "If she is so bent on losing her money—"

"Nobody said she lost her money," put in Leighton quietly.

"No; but she does. If she won, old Peter Bart wouldn't object to her playing."

Leighton chuckled.

"Don't try to Sherlock Holmes me, little girl," he pleaded. "Tell me what you want to do in plain United States—I can tell by your eyes that it's something big."

"It's perfectly—legitimate, Tommy," she told him.

"Why, of course it is," he laughed, patting her hand affectionately.

"It is," she insisted. "I thought we could take a cottage at Pinelake and invite Mrs. Bart over for bridge. It would be pleasure and business both, too. You know what kind of a game I play, Tom. It would be all perfectly—straight, boy. I mean it!"

For a second he was silent, and his blue eyes were fixed straight ahead at the hard, macadam road. Suddenly he took Rosie's hand and pressed it until she winced with pain. But she did not attempt to withdraw it.

"Sometimes I think I've given you a pretty raw deal, little girl," he said very seriously. "I drew you into this. But for me you'd never have lived the life you are living. It's all wrong."

"Yes, it's all wrong," she nodded softly, with an answering squeeze. "But you've been so good to me, so wonderful, that I just can't imagine life without you. I'd rather be what I am a hundred times over than be parted from you—even for a day! I was a poor little half-starved governess when you found me in London. Now—"

"Now?" he caught her up eagerly.

"Now I am your wife," she answered him, and the half shy, wholly tender glance she gave him scattered all the clouds in his sky. He cast a hurried look around and then kissed her.

"All right," he said presently; "we'll go over to Pinelake now if you say so

and find a cottage. Then you can scrape an acquaintance with Mrs. Peter J. and show her how to play bridge. Looking back, it seems to me that old Peter J. will have to keep his headache factory working overtime if Mrs. Bart plays many games with you. What's my game this time—anything?"

"You're Mr. Herbert Kellie—Kellie with an 'ie,' remember."

"And you're Mrs. Herbert Kellie—with an 'ie,' I suppose?"

"Certainly I am."

"All right. Only don't call me 'Bertie'—please!"

He waited for her to laugh, as she always did at his little pleasantries; but instead she kept her eyes fixed on the road that stretched before them, and he knew that she was listening very intently.

"What is it?" he asked.

"I hear a machine coming," she told him, speaking hurriedly. "Ten to one it's Mrs. Bart coming back. Suppose you turn the car around, set it across the road, you know, and get under it—like something was wrong. The Bart car will have to stop—it just can't pass us. Then I'll have a chance to make the lady's acquaintance and invite her over to our cottage at Pinelake."

Leighton looked at her in sheer amazement.

"Good gracious, Rosie! And you say it is always I who do the planning. You're a genius! After this I will leave all the plan building to you, and just carry out your ideas as you give them to me. You've left me in the kindergarten all right."

"I thought there wasn't going to be any 'after this'?" said Rosie. But she was too full of her wonderful scheme to stop and argue the question, and with Leighton at the wheel, she directed him just where to run the machine.

The scene was not set a minute too soon. Almost before Leighton was under the car the Bart automobile came within sight. Mrs. Bart, Rosie observed, was seated in the tonneau alone.

The Bart car slowed down and then came to a stop a few paces away, and Mrs. Bart, very much annoyed at the

delay, stood up, calling to her chauffeur, a Frenchman, to go to Leighton's assistance.

"It's nothing much, really," smiled Rosie. And then she saw the two smart English terriers in the tonneau with their mistress and gave a little cry of pleasure.

"Aren't they beauties! May I come over and see them?" she asked.

Mrs. Bart graciously consented, and in a twinkling Rosie had climbed out of the hired machine and tripped across to the gorgeous red car with the Bart arms on its panels.

Rosie soon dismissed the terriers. She was passionately fond of dogs, but just now she had come to talk cards, and every minute of her time was precious.

"It was really terrible stupid of Herbert to try to run the car up the embankment," she said, with her most charming smile. "And just when I was in such a hurry, too! Perhaps you can appreciate my impatience—do you play bridge?"

Mrs. Bart clenched her hands.

"It is the one thing that makes life bearable down here in this wretched country," she cried. "I am returning from a party now—over at Pinelake. No, I wasn't lucky today, but we had a lovely game; and I am hoping that to-morrow afternoon—"

"Why, of course you will!" interrupted Rosie eagerly. "And you must come and play bridge with us after we get settled. My husband has taken a cottage at Pinelake for the summer, and we are both of us devoted to bridge. As you say, the country would be unbearable without cards."

Leighton crawled out from under the hired machine reluctantly, for he did not know if Rosie had completed her plans yet, but there was no help for it since the Frenchman had declared there was nothing wrong with the car. Rosie saw him; she also saw Mrs. Bart's chauffeur, and she rose to go. Then Mrs. Bart searched in her jeweled purse and gave Rosie her card, saying she would dearly love to come over to Pinelake, but Mrs. Kellie seemingly forgot to give the millionaire's wife her card, and so they parted—with many promises.

"It's all right," said Rosie with a triumphant little nod when she was seated beside Leighton once more. "All we've got to do now is to get the cage; I've caught the bird."

II

THE cottage turned out to be a bungalow, tastefully furnished and charmingly situated in a tiny garden facing the lake. Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Kellie—they were English people, and Mr. Kellie was head of the New York office of a London something-or-other company—had come to Pinelake for a rest—they found the American summers so fatiguingly hot! They were exclusive, too, and accepted few invitations, so that at last few people in the cottage colony sent them cards—which was exactly what Rosie and Tom desired most.

But Mrs. Peter J. Bart came nearly every day to the bungalow, came early and stayed late. And they always played bridge.

Rosie was no idiot, and she had told Leighton from the first that the game was to be played squarely. There was always a fourth at their table asked from among the cottagers; and while this guest was seldom the same person twice in succession, he was always of sufficient importance to kill any gossip that quite naturally arose.

Oddly enough, Mrs. Bart rose from the table a winner the first afternoon she came to the bungalow.

"She plays much better than I thought she would," Rosie said to Tom. "And she carried off twenty dollars of mine, too. Did you notice how very, very greedy she seemed about the money?"

"People like that always are," replied Leighton. He fired his pipe and walked out on the veranda. Presently he called to Rosie: "Come on out and I'll take you rowing on the lake. That's better than cards any day."

The next afternoon Mrs. Bart lost—and the next, and the next. The third afternoon she had played wildly and for large stakes, and when she was ready to

go home she owed her hostess nearly five hundred dollars. She had not paid her debts the two preceding days, and while Rosie said nothing to her now about a settlement, she murmured a few words in her ear when she kissed her good-bye.

After the big red machine had gone tearing back to Bartwood at sixty miles an hour, Mrs. Bart trying to reach home before her husband arrived on the five-thirty train from New York, Mrs. Kellie's other guest sought out Mr. Kellie on the veranda and told him a few things which he already knew.

"It's just this, Kellie," he said: "I am sure you do not know about it—and by the way, my dear fellow, you are playing pretty big for us here at Pinelake. But what I wanted to say was this: Mr. Bart has positively forbidden Mrs. Bart to play cards for money. It's almost a disease with her—when she starts it she never knows when or where it will stop. She's lost thousands in the last year, I dare say, until at last Bart just put his foot down on it. He refuses to let her play in their house at Bartwood, and he asked his friends here not to invite his wife if there is to be bridge. Furthermore I doubt if he would pay her card debts—and she has not a penny of her own, you know."

Leighton had turned a dull brick red under the other's steady gaze, but he was a man of much charm and full of resources and his guest set down his flush to embarrassment.

"I'm telling you this as your friend, you know, Kellie," he added hastily.

Leighton thanked him gravely.

"I appreciate your confidence, and I will ask Mrs. Kellie not to have Mrs. Bart over for cards again," he said.

But Mrs. Kellie decided not to have Mr. Kingdon over for cards again—it was much easier so, and besides, "Frances" did not like him. "Frances" was Mrs. Peter J. Bart.

"You understand what he told me?" Tom asked. "He said he doubted very much if her husband would pay her bridge debts. Don't let her get to owing you too much. Remember it is costing us a pretty penny to live here like Western plutocrats, and we can't afford to see

it all going out and nothing coming in, as the song says. If you want to send that little artist girl to Paris this winter—"

"I do," said Rosie quickly; "I will! She is a perfect genius, Tom. And the family is really poor."

"I know. You're ace high." He laughed, then drew her to him and kissed her lips. "Mrs. Bart didn't square herself today again," he continued. "She won't be able to pay next, and she's afraid to tell old Bart—look out!"

"There's her father—he'll certainly help her," cried Rosie, pouting.

"A deacon! Bridge debts!" scoffed Tom.

"Well, the landlady spoke of an Aunt Webb—how about her?"

"I can see Frances Bart asking her, and Aunt Webb handing over the money! Rosie, watch out!"

Rosie made faces at him from her comfortable place in the porch hammock. She was all in white, very charming and pretty and girlish-looking.

"I'll get it," she mocked. "I'm not afraid."

While Leighton said nothing more to her about Mrs. Bart's bridge debts, she caught him looking at her with an odd light in his eyes upon several occasions when Frances went off in her big red machine without "settling." Rosie kept account of what Mrs. Bart owed her, and while she knew to the penny what the total was, she was genuinely frightened when one afternoon she found it represented something like three thousand dollars. And the worst of it was that Mrs. Bart had not said a word about the money she owed for nearly a week.

Flushed and excited, Rosie followed Leighton out on the little vine-hung veranda and told him just how matters stood.

"She owes us three thousand dollars, Tom!" she cried. "Of course it is all my fault for letting it run so long and not asking her before to pay, but—it would be awful to lose all that money! And the expenses here are heavy. What shall we do?"

"We'll have to get it—that's all there is to it," he answered back.

"But how?"

"Legitimately—if we can." He drew savagely on his pipe. "You ask her point blank to pay her debts—ask her tomorrow. If she puts you off or refuses, say you will go to her husband for the money. I think that will fix everything satisfactorily."

"I wouldn't like to make trouble between her and her husband, Tommy," she said softly. "Think what it would mean to us if somebody tried to get me in wrong with you!"

"We're not the Barts, thank the Lord!" he ejaculated piously. "And don't you let their unhappiness move you an inch. When Peter J. Bart married his wife, he picked out the handsomest woman he could find. When Frances Parker married her husband, she picked out the richest man she could get. That's all there is to their romance, little woman."

The next afternoon Mrs. Herbert Kellie sat in her cool, darkened living room and waited for Mrs. Bart. There was no card table in sight and a fourth had not been asked. Perhaps Frances Bart felt the change in the atmosphere, for she came quickly up the tiny garden to the porch, and without stopping to ring the bell, opened the door and went straight to Rosie's chair. She showed no surprise at the absence of the table and the other guest.

"My dear Mrs. Bart, have you an idea what you owe me?" began Rosie, plunging at once into the heart of things. "Frankly, you must settle—Mr. Kellie knows, and he is terribly angry with me. He says we must pay our debts and then stop. He says it is awful—almost as bad as gambling."

Mrs. Bart coughed nervously behind her hand, and the gesture reminded Rosie of the landlady on the road to Bartwood.

"How much is it?" she asked.

"A trifle over three thousand dollars," Rosie told her, watching her closely. "Here are your I. O. U's. You know you have never paid up since we've been playing together," she added.

Mrs. Bart jumped up and walked the length of the pretty room. Then she

came back and sank down in her cushioned wicker chair again.

"I will be honest with you," she said tranquilly. "I simply can't pay my debts—I haven't the money. And Mr. Bart will not give it to me. He doesn't approve of bridge."

"His personal feelings in the matter have nothing whatever to do with the case," returned Rosie warmly. "You owe me the money and I am going to have it. If I owed you three thousand dollars you would expect it—now wouldn't you?"

"Mr. Kellie is not the kind of man Mr. Bart is," fenced Frances craftily. "My husband is an old man, with an old man's prejudices, and he looks upon bridge as the pastime of the lost."

Rosie laughed outright.

"Perhaps that is because you are not so fortunate as to win," she said. "As for his being an old man, he is also a rich man; and if you don't pay me my money at once I shall go up to New York and show him these signed I. O. U's."

"You wouldn't dare!" cried Mrs. Bart.

"Yes I would, too."

"He would be furious with me!"

"But I can't afford to lose three thousand dollars," said Rosie. "Surely you didn't come here day after day to play bridge and not expect to pay your debts when you lost! Mr. Kingdon has been here and seen you make those debts, too, remember."

"Jim Kingdon is an old woman!" cried Mrs. Bart angrily.

Rosie shrugged her shoulders and said nothing.

For the next half-hour the two women fought each other with their deadliest weapons, their tongues. Rosie was firm; Shylock was never more determined than she. Frances Bart, at first openly defiant, became presently pleading, then reckless. Almost hysterical, she reached up and unfastened a string of pearls she wore around her neck, throwing it in Rosie's lap.

"Take this—keep it!" she cried. "I'll tell him I lost it and he'll offer a reward. Then you can find it and get the money. Won't that do?"

Rosie glanced at the pearls, arriving at their market value in less time than it would take most people to count them. She knew they would fetch three thousand dollars in Amsterdam without any questions, but she also knew that no man in his right mind would ever offer so large a reward for their return. Still she took them, agreeing to Mrs. Bart's scheme.

When Tom saw them he made a wry face; then he laughed at the expression on Rosie's.

"Little woman, you hardly expect old Peter J. to offer three thousand dollars for the return of this!" he said.

"No-o."

"Then what?"

"I—hardly know. What do you think?"

"I think we'd better get that three thousand as quickly as we can and clear out of here," he told her. Get it legitimately—if we can; if not, then—"

"Tom, you wouldn't run away with the necklace?" she cried imploringly.

"Never! Why, I wouldn't take any risks for such a trifle." He laughed, and taking her by the shoulders, shook her playfully. "No, ma'am, that's not my idea at all. We're after big game—we don't take candy from children. I'm going to make them pay Frances Bart's bridge debts."

Rosie started. "Who?" she asked.

"Why, Peter J. and Aunt Webb, and her father, Deacon Parker," he answered, smiling.

"All of them?"

"Certainly—interest on your money. Now give me those I. O. U's and the necklace. I'm going to Boston to-night."

III

AUNT RUTH WEBB lived in Mt. Vernon Street, and the house was like its tenant, old-fashioned, aristocratic and handsome.

She was greatly surprised to hear that Mr. Herbert Kellie was waiting to see her in the little back parlor, and she turned the card over again and again as if trying to read from its appearance the meaning of the gentleman's visit. Then,

with a little sigh, she put it away, and went downstairs to see him.

Mr. Kellie stated his business plainly. He was polite but firm.

"I have come to you," he said, "because I thought, for your niece's sake, such a step would be wisest. I am trying to deal as gently with her as I can, although she has not hesitated to impose upon my wife. I suppose you know your niece's—Mrs. Peter J. Bart's—signature?"

Aunt Webb clutched the arms of her chair and sat forward expectantly.

"Tell me, what has Frances been doing now?" she asked.

Mr. Kellie told his whole story in one significant word: "Bridge!"

"I shall not pay Frances Bart's bridge debts," declared Aunt Webb then. "I have done it more times than I have fingers on my two hands—that was before she married Peter J. Since then I have refused, and I refuse again now. If my niece owes you money, or owes your wife money, then I can only say I am sorry for you, for you will not find me willing to pay Frances's card debts. Did she tell you to come to me?"

"No, madam," said Mr. Kellie. He got up and stood a little undecided, looking at the papers in his hands. "The fact is, I came here to see you before I went to Peter J. Bart," he continued presently. "I know how bitterly opposed Mr. Bart is to bridge—I have even heard he has said he would divorce your niece if she ever again contracted card debts. Also I believe Mr. Parker, her father, has spoken to her about the matter."

"We have all spoken to her," cried Mrs. Webb. "It is terrible! I—I declare, I don't know what to do—or say!"

"I don't know what Mr. Parker will do and say when he knows," observed Mr. Kellie.

"Surely you will not tell him!" cried the old lady, aghast. "Why, his church—"

"I must either tell him or your niece's husband. This debt must be paid. I will go to Mr. Parker first; and if he will pay these I. O. U's, well and good. If not, then, much as I dislike to do it, I

must go and state the facts to Mr. Bart."

Aunt Ruth Webb wrung her hands; she walked the floor; she discoursed long and earnestly upon the evil of card playing—after which she signed a cheque for three thousand dollars and gave it to Mr. Kellie.

Mr. Kellie was, of course, duly grateful, and he suggested, as he was not known at Mrs. Webb's bank, that she send one of her servants with him that far so that he would have no trouble in getting the money. So Mrs. Webb's maid was pressed into service and sent with him, and Mr. Kellie departed, taking with him Mrs. Bart's I. O. U's. And to this day Aunt Ruth Webb doesn't know that she should have kept them in exchange for the cheque.

An hour later, in the study of his Brookline residence, Myles Parker frowned at the card of Herbert Kellie. Then he looked at the clock, told the butler to show the gentleman in, and sat down to wait the entrance of his visitor.

The moment Mr. Kellie entered the handsomely furnished study and saw Mr. Parker seated at the desk, he felt a sudden thrill of joy that sent a mischievous light to his Irish blue eyes.

"Little woman," he said afterward to Rosie, "he is one of those men who would rather part with their chances of a halo than with one American dollar."

Suavely Mr. Kellie explained the nature of his visit. He even spoke apologetically, but this failed to soften the blow. Mr. Parker forgot that he was a deacon; he forgot everything but the three thousand dollars, and he walked the floor and raged.

"It is preposterous to come to me! I will not pay her debts!" he stormed. "Go to her husband! Three thousand—fiddlesticks! Why, the girl is mad!"

"It is certainly unfortunate," said Mr. Kellie meekly. "I don't know what to do. I came to you because I felt sure you would not want Mr. Bart to know. I would have gone to the lady's aunt, Mrs. Webb, who I hear is wealthy, but I was also told that Mrs. Bart is likely to be heir to her aunt's fortune, and know-

ing that Mrs. Webb objects strongly to card playing—"

"It would never, never do for you to go to Mrs. Webb!" snapped Mr. Parker. "If she knew of this I wouldn't give two cents for Frances Bart's chances of inheriting. It would be just like Ruth to cut her off without a penny—the idiot!"

"Then perhaps I had better take these I. O. U's to Mr. Bart," suggested Mr. Kellie, moving toward the door.

"And have him sue for a divorce, eh?" roared Mr. Parker. "Use some judgment, can't you? It would ruin me. There has never been a divorce in the Parker family, Mr. Kellie. Three thousand dollars! Won't you settle for less? After all, a gambling debt—"

"Your daughter has acknowledged that debt to be a just one," interrupted Mr. Kellie with a shrug. "I have no desire in the world to make trouble for Mrs. Bart, but I intend to collect this money. If you won't pay me, then I must go to Mr. Bart, and if he refuses I will try Mrs. Webb. I am willing that you go with me down to Pinelake and see Mrs. Bart about these debts. Or you may speak to her by long distance. I have a cottage at Pinelake and I am known to the summer colony there; also it is known that Mrs. Bart came to our house to play bridge. I am quite agreeable that you return with me and speak to your daughter first, Mr. Parker."

Mr. Parker looked at his well manicured hands and hesitated. He was caught, and there was nothing but to do what this man demanded of him. He would have dearly liked to swear, but he did not; instead, he sat down and wrote a cheque for three thousand dollars.

"Thank you," said Mr. Kellie. "Er—a—would you kindly have one of your men take it to your bank and have it certified? Or, better still, perhaps you will send him with me when I go to have it cashed. I suppose your valet is known there?"

Mr. Kellie left Boston that night with six thousand dollars in cash; also he guarded almost as closely a little lot of I. O. U's signed "Frances Parker Bart." In Mr. Parker's desk out at his Brookline home there was a sealed envelope

which he shook his fist at every time he came upon it. But the slips of paper inclosed were blank. Mr. Kellie, just before his departure, had changed envelopes with his host, and the envelope which cost Mr. Parker three thousand dollars contained only useless paper, thanks to the sleight-of-hand work which his visitor practised so successfully.

Mrs. Kellie was waiting for Mr. Kellie at the King William Hotel in New York, and she kissed him twice before she asked him a word about his Boston trip. When he told her, she was silent for a moment.

"Listen, Rosie," he told her gently, for he saw the change directly; "I'm not sending Aunt Webb to the poorhouse nor driving old Myles Parker to the bankruptcy courts by taking their little old three thousand dollars. Both of them are wealthy. Aunt Webb doesn't spend her interest, I expect, and Parker is downright stingy. Why, you do more good in one year with your money—"

"Other people's money," she corrected softly. Then she cocked her head on one side like a pert sparrow, and smiled. "It's all right if we haven't beggared them, I guess," she said. "And I do want to send Effie to Paris, and your baritone is costing you more than you thought. It's all right—I guess."

He patted her hands. Then he looked at his watch, walked to the window and back again.

"Has Peter Bart offered a reward for the return of his wife's necklace yet?" he asked.

"Yes. It's in all the papers—one thousand dollars," nodded Rosie.

"Good! Do you think you could go down to his office and get it? Go in character. You've got some things at Tony's, haven't you?"

"Yes, a bunch of make-up," she returned. "Suppose I pay my respects to him as a blonde chorus lady?"

"Well"—he nodded and went to put on his own coat and hat—"I'm going to see him now myself. I think these I. O. U's of his wife's are worth another three thousand yet." He took her in his arms, and for a second she lay there, perfectly still. "I'll see you at Tony's, then—at

three o'clock, say. Good-bye. Be careful, won't you?"

He was there first, and was standing at the open door when she came up the last flight of stairs; his face was alight with love when he saw her. Her shoes were run down at the heels, and the lavender dress was soiled and ill-fitting, while a huge black hat was set rakishly on her yellow curls at an angle which threw her eyes into shadow.

"Well," she laughed, lifting off the hat and wig and giving them to Leighton, "how did old Peter J. receive you?"

"He didn't receive me at all," grinned Leighton. "When he learned the nature of my visit he wanted to have me thrown bodily out of his office. It was only when I threatened to go to Aunt Ruth Webb with his wife's I. O. U's that he consented to listen to reason. You see, he fondly believes that some day Aunt Webb will go to Heaven and leave Frances all her money. But if Aunt Webb were to hear that her niece played cards—for money—well, her chances wouldn't be many then, I suggested delicately. He paid. I've got it here. Rosie, so far we are nine thousand dollars richer for having known Mrs. Peter J. Bart. Now what did you do?"

Rosie drew down the corners of her pretty mouth but her eyes were dancing.

"He paid me the reward—a cheque, Tommy—without asking me a question. It was really disappointing—until I presented the cheque at the bank."

"They refused to cash it?"

"You guessed it. I was told the cheque was no good, and that I'd have to take it back to Mr. Bart and so on and so on. Of course he had 'phoned to the bank and stopped payment. But I kind of thought old Peter J. would do something like that, so I kept—these."

She opened her palm and showed him three big white pearls.

"I could only match three," she confessed with a smile. "You remember that cheap necklace you got in Paris? Well, I always thought it would come in handy some day, and today was the day. Three of the pearls in Mrs. Bart's necklace are worth about ten cents apiece, Tommy boy."

MODERN AIDS TO ROMANCE

By Richard Le Gallienne

THERE have, of course, in all ages been those who made a business of running down the times in which they lived—tiresome people for whom everything had gone to the dogs—or was rapidly going—uncomfortable critics who could never make themselves at home in their own century, and whose weary shibboleth was that of some legendary perfect past.

In Rome this particular kind of bore went by the name of *laudator temporis acti*; and, if we have no such concise Anglo-Saxon phrase for the type, we still have the type no less ubiquitously with us. The bugbear of such is "modern science," or "modern thought," a monster which, we are frequently assured, is fast devouring all the beautiful and good in human life, a Moloch fed on the dreams and ideals and noble faiths of man. Modernity! For such "modernity" has taken the place of "Anti-Christ." These sad, nervous people have no eye for the beautiful patterns and fantastics of change, none of that faith which rejoices to watch "the roaring loom of time" weaving ever new garments for the unchanging eternal gods. In new temples, strangely enough, they see only atheism, instead of the vitality of spiritual evolution; in new affirmations they scent only dangerous denials. With the more grave misgivings of these folk of little faith this is not the place to deal, though actually if there were any ground for belief in a modern decay of religion, we might seriously begin to believe in the alleged decay of romance.

Yes, romance, we not infrequently hear, is dead. Modern science has killed it. It is essentially a "thing of the past"—an affair presumably of stage

coaches, powdered wigs and lace ruffles. It cannot breathe in what is spoken of as "this materialistic age."

The dullards who repeat these platitudes of the muddle-headed multitude are surely the only people for whom they are true. It is they alone who are the materialists, confusing as they do the spirit of romance with its wornout garments of bygone fashions. Such people are so clearly out of court as not to be worth controverting, except for the opportunity they give one of confidently making the joyous affirmation that, far from romance being dead in our day, there never was a more romantic age than ours, and that never since the world began has it offered so many opportunities, so many facilities for romance as at the present time.

In fact, a very little thinking will show that of all those benefited by "the blessings of modern science," it is the lovers of the community who as a body have most to be thankful for. Indeed, so true is this that it might almost seem as though the modern laboratory has been run, primarily from romantic motives, to the end that the old reproach should be removed and the course of true love run magically smooth. Valuable as the telephone may be in business affairs, it is simply invaluable in the affairs of love; and mechanics the world over are absorbed in the problem of aerial flight, whether they know it or not, chiefly to provide Love with wings as swift as his desire.

Distance may lend enchantment to those whom we prefer to appreciate from afar, but nearness is the real enchantment to your true lover, and distance is his natural enemy. Distance

and the slow-footedness of Time are his immemorial evils. Both of these modern science has all but annihilated. Consider for a moment the conditions under which love was carried on in those old days which some people find so romantic. Think what a comparatively short distance meant then, with snail-paced precarious mails, and the only means of communication horses by land, and sailing ships by sea. How men and women had the courage to go on long journeys at all away from each other in those days is hard to realize, knowing what an impenetrable curtain of silence and mystery immediately fell between them with the winding of the coach horn, or the last wave of the plumed hat as it disappeared behind the last turning of the road—leaving those at home with nothing for company but the yearning horizon and the aching, uncommunicative hours. Days, weeks, months, even years, must go by in waiting for a word—and when at last it came, brought on lumbering wheels or at best by some courier on his steaming mud-splashed mount, precious as it was, it was already grown old and cold and perhaps long since untrue.

Imagine perhaps being dependent for one's heart news on some chance soldier limping back from the wars, or some pilgrim from the Holy Land with scallop shell and staff!

Distance was indeed a form of death under such conditions—no wonder men made their wills as they set out on a journey—and when actual physical death did not intervene, how much of that slow death-in-life, that fading of the memory and that numbing of the affections which absence too often brings, was even still more to be feared. The loved face might indeed return, looking much the same as when it went away, but what of the heart that went a-journeying, too? What even of the hearts that remained at home?

The chances of death and disaster not even modern science can forestall, though even these it has considerably lessened; but that other death of the heart, which comes of the slow starvation of silence and absence, it may be

held to have all but vanquished. Thanks to its weird magicians, you may be seas or continents away from her whom your soul loveth, yet "at her window bid good morrow" as punctually as if you lived next door, or serenade her by electricity—at all hours of the night. If you sigh in New York, she can hear you and sigh back in San Francisco; and soon her very face will be carried to you at any moment of the day along the magic wires. Nor will you need to wait for the postman, but be able to read her flowerlike words as they write themselves out on the luminous slate before you, at the very moment as she leans her fragrant bosom upon her electric desk three thousand miles away. If this isn't romantic, one may well ask what is!

To take the telephone alone, surely the romance of Pyramus and Thisbe, with their primitive hole in the wall, was a tame affair compared with the possibilities of this magic toy, by means of which you can talk with your love not merely through a wall but through the Rocky Mountains. You can whisper sweet nothings to her across the sounding sea, and bid her "sleep well" over leagues of primeval forest, and through the stoniest-hearted city her soft voice will find its way. Even in mid-ocean the "wireless" will bring you news of her *mal-de-mer*. And more than that; should you wish to carry her voice with you from place to place, science is once more at your service with another magic toy—the phonograph—by which indeed she can still go on speaking to you, if you have the courage to listen, from beyond the grave.

The telegraph, the telephone, the "wireless," the phonograph, the electric letter writer—such are the modern "conveniences" of romance; and, should an elopement be on foot, what are the fastest post chaise or the fleetest horses compared with a high-powered automobile? And when the airship really comes, what romance that has ever been will compare for excitement with an elopement through the sky?

Apart from the practical conveniences of these various new devices, there is a

poetic quality about the mere devices themselves which is full of fascination and charm. Whether we call up our sweetheart or our stockbroker, what a thing of enchantment the telephone is merely in itself! Such devices turn the veriest prose of life into poetry; and, indeed, the more prosaic the uses to which we put them, the more marvelous by contrast their marvel seems. Even our businesses are carried on by agencies more mysterious and truly magical than anything in the "Arabian Nights," and all day long we are playing with mysterious natural laws and exquisite natural forces as in a small way when boys we used to delight in our experiments with oxygen and hydrogen and Leyden jars. Science has thus brought an element of romantic "fun," so to speak, even into our stores and our counting houses. I wonder if "Central" realizes what a truly romantic employment is hers?

But, pressed into the high service of love, one sees at once what a poetic fitness there is in their employ, and how our much abused modern science has found at last for that fastidious god appropriately dignified a beautiful ministrant. Coarse and vulgar indeed seem the ancient servitors and uncouth machinery by which the divine business of the god was carried on of old. Today, through the skill of science, the august lightning has become his messenger, and the hidden gnomes of air and sea hasten to do his bidding.

Modern science, then, so far from being an enemy of romance, is seen on every hand to be its sympathetic and resourceful friend, its swift and irresistible helper in its serious need and an indulgent minister to its lighter fancies. Be it whim or emergency, the modern laboratory is equally at the service of romance, equally ready to gratify mankind with a torpedo or a toy.

Not only, however, has modern science thus put itself at the service of romance, by supplying it with its various magic machinery of communication, but modern thought—that much maligned bugbear of timorous minds—has generated an atmosphere increasingly favorable to and sympathetic with the

romantic expression of human nature in all its forms.

The world has unmistakably grown younger again during the last twenty years, as though—which, indeed, is the fact—it had thrown off an accumulation of mopishness, shaken itself free from imaginary middle-aged restrictions and preoccupations. All over the world there is a wind of youth blowing such as has not freshened the air of time since the days of Elizabeth. Once more the spring of a new Renaissance of Human Nature is upon us. It is the fashion to be young, and the age of romance both for men and women has been indefinitely extended. No one gives up the game, or is expected to, till he is genuinely tired of playing it. Mopish conventions are less and less allowed to restrict that free and joyous play of vitality dear to the modern heart, which is the essence of all romance. More and more the world is growing to love a lover, and one has only to read the newspapers to see how sympathetic are the times to any generous and adventurous display of the passions.

This more humane temper is the result of many causes. The disintegration of religious superstition, and the substitution in its stead of spiritual ideals closer to the facts of life, is one of these. All that was good in Puritanism has been retained by the modern spirit, while its narrowing and numbing features, its anti-human, self-mortifying, provincial side have passed or are passing in the regenerating sunlight of what one might call a spiritual paganism, which conceives of natural forces and natural laws as inherently pure and mysteriously sacred. Thus the way of a man with a maid is no longer a shame-faced affair, but it is more and more realized that in its romance and its multifarious refinements of development are the "law of the prophets," the "eternal meanings" of natural religion and social spirituality.

Then, too, the spread of democracy, resulting in the breaking down of caste barriers, is all to the good of romance. Swiftly and surely Guelph and Ghibelline and break-neck orchard walls are passing

away. If Romeo and Juliet make a tragedy of it nowadays, they have only to blame their own mismanagement, for the world is with them as it has never been before, and all sensible fathers and mothers know it.

Again, the freer intercourse between the sexes tends incalculably to smoothen that course of true love once so proverbially rough but now indeed in danger of being made too unexcitingly smooth. Yet if as a result certain old combinations of romance are becoming obsolete, new ones, no less picturesque, and even more vital in their drama, are being evolved every day by the new conditions. Those very inroads being so rapidly and successfully made by woman into the immemorial business of man, which are superficially regarded by some as dangerous to the tenderer sentiments between men and women, are, on the contrary, merely widening the area of romance, and will eventually develop, as they can be seen already developing, a new chivalry and a new poetry of the sexes no less deep and far more many-sided than the old. The robust comradeship between the two already resulting from the more active sharing of common interests cannot but tend to a deeper and more exhilarating union of man and woman, a completer, intenser marriage literally of true minds as well as bodies than was possible in the old régime, when the masculine and feminine "spheres" were kept so jealously distinct and only allowed to touch at the elementary points of relationship. There has always been a thrill of adventure when either has been admitted a little further into the other's world than was customary. How thrilling, therefore, will it be when men and women entirely share in each other's lives, without fictitious reverses and mysteries, and face the whole adventure of life squarely and completely together, all the more husband and wife for being comrades as well—as many men and women of the new era are already joyously doing.

And, merely on the surface, what a new romantic element woman has introduced into the daily drudgery of

men's lives by her mere presence in their offices! She cannot always be beautiful, poor dear, and she is not invariably gracious, it is true; yet, on the whole, how much the atmosphere of office life has gained in amenity by the coming of the stenographer, the typewriter, and the telephone girl, not to speak of her frequent decorative value in a world that has hitherto been uncompromisingly harsh and unadorned! Men may affect to ignore this, and cannot afford indeed to be too sensitive to these flowery presences that have so considerably supplanted those misbegotten young miscreants known as office boys, a vanishing race of human terror; yet there she is, all the same, in spite of her businesslike airs and her prosaic tasks, silently diffusing about her that eternal mystery which she can never lose, be her occupations never so masculine.

There she is with her subtly wreathed hair and her absurd little lace handkerchiefs and her furtive powder puff and her bits of immemorial ornaments and the soft sound of her skirts and all the rest of it. Never mind how grimly and even brusquely you may be dictating to her specifications for steel rails or the like, little wafts of perfume cannot help floating across to your rolltop desk, and you are a man and she is a woman, for all that; and instead of having her with you at fag ends of your days, you have her with you all day long now—and your sisters and your sweethearts are so much the nearer to you all day for her presence, and, whether you know it or not, you are so much the less a brute because she is there.

Where the loss to romance comes in in these admirable new arrangements of modern commerce it is hard to see. Of course a new element of danger is thus introduced into the routine of our daily lives, but when was danger an enemy to romance? The "bright face" of this particular "danger" who would be without? The beloved essayist from whom that last phrase is, of course, adapted, declared, as we all know, that to marry is "to domesticate the recording angel." One might say that the modern business man has officialized the ministering

angel—perhaps some other forms of angel as well.

In their work, then, as in their play, men and women are more and more coming to share with each other as comrades, and really the fun of life seems in no wise diminished as a consequence. Rather the contrary, it would seem, if one is to judge from the "Decameron" of the newspapers. Yet it is not very long ago that man looked askance at woman's wistful plea to take part even in his play. He had the old boyish fear that she would spoil the game. However, it didn't take him long to find out his mistake and to know woman for the true "sport" that she can be. And in that discovery it was another invention of that wicked modern science that was the chief, if humble seeming, factor, no less than that eclipsed but inexpressibly useful instrument (of flirtation) in the hands of a kind providence, the bicycle.

The service of the bicycle to the "emancipation of woman" movements has perhaps never been acknowledged by the philosopher; but a little thought will make evident how far reaching that service has been. When that near day arrives on which woman shall call her-

self absolutely "free," should she feel inclined to celebrate her freedom by some monument of her gratitude, let the monument be neither to man nor woman, however valiant in the fight, but simply let it take the form of an enthroned and laureled bicycle—for the moment woman mounted that apparently innocent machine, it carried her on the high-road to freedom. On that she could go not only where she pleased, but—what is even more to the point—with whom she pleased. The free companionship of man and woman had begun. Then and forever ended the old system of courtship, which seems so laughable and even incredible today. One was no longer expected to pay court to one's beloved, sitting stiffly on straight-backed chairs in a chill drawing-room in the non-conducting, or non-conducive, presence of still chillier maiden aunts. The doom of the *duenna* was sounded; the chill drawing-room was exchanged for "the open road" and the whispering woodland; and soon it is to come about that a man shall propose to his wife high up in the blue heavens, in an airship softly swaying at anchor in the wake of the evening star.



CHARITY

By Gertrude Huntington McGiffert

HATH the heart not alms for its palsied hours,
 A tear for its dungeon bred?
 Do not weeping days dig gaping graves
 For their galleys of trampled dead?

Wouldst thou force to Scorn's mirror thy crippled Soul—
 Deny hope to a thing that lives?
 Can not Self forgive a red-stained Self
 As God Himself forgives?

DAY AND NIGHT

By Mrs. Poultney Bigelow

WHEN the summer sun brings in the day,
 Staining with rose the dawn's cool gray,
 He kindles with joy in his flaming fires
Lupins, rising in purple spires,
Amethyst buds of the lilacs, seen
Set in a bush of piercing green—
White and pink and red of the thorns,
Honeysuckle with fairy horns
Blowing out sweetness in every breeze—
Till the snowy clouds on violet seas
Long to stoop, in their onward flight,
And rest midst the color and scent and light.

Then, O my heart, I strive to be gay—
Sunlight chases phantoms away;
Happiness floods the soul in a stream;
Sorrow grows dim like a face in a dream.
With the sight of the verdant blossoming sod,
My soul in rapture flies up to God.

But the earth rises up and hides the sun;
Sinister shadows, when day is done,
Blot the purple and rose and green
Till even the lilies are no more seen,
And the air takes on an eerie breath,
That seems the chill forerunner of death.
The lilacs whisper and sway with fear—
An awful formless something is near!

Then do I lose what the sunlight gave;
Then round my heart close the sods of the grave.

Thy grave, lonely amongst the crowd,
Flowerless, stoneless—while white and proud
Rise in the dark and glimmer pale
Monuments telling the world a tale
Of bodies once filled with the spark divine,
But none, my darling, more dear than thine!

Ah, no wonder I go to rest,
Like a bird that flies to an empty nest!

COUSIN FRED, OF THE LEISURE CLASSES

By Henry Sydnor Harrison

WHEN the hour of 10 P.M. strikes, Mother-and-Sis's room, a free-for-all sitting room by day, reasserts its essentially bed character, and I take my boys' prose composition books down to the dining room, where the Baltimore heater is situated, there renewing my attentions to such little slips as "*Hoc est liberi puerorum*" and "*Filius poetæ bona sunt.*"

It was in the dining room that Monson's startling "rush" of Cousin Fred began. Here I sat, on the fateful night, pondering how strangely women can believe anything they want to of the men they adore, and where we were going to dig up the mortgage interest due next month, and why bacon was forty cents a pound.

Cousin Fred, who sat opposite reading a magazine and looking as princely and charming as one of the Greek gods in the clothing advertisements, was responsible for my cogitations about the strangeness of a woman's heart. For but two hours had passed since Sis had confided to me, with tears in her eyes, how terribly sensitive dear Fred had grown about his long idleness, and how he longed and yearned and thirsted and gasped for work—any work, however humble, so long as it enabled him to assume his man's share of our expenses, and some day, perchance, lift the mortgage from our little home. Sis knew all these things because Fred had told her so himself.

Yet my little sister also knew very well that Cousin Fred has resigned three excellent positions in the five months since he nominated himself to come and live

with us, and only three weeks ago avoided employment by the Bankhurst Lumber Corporation with admirable adroitness. Now, considering that she has far more garden sense than some girls of nineteen you have read about, was it not remarkable how she escaped a certain deadly conclusion—viz.: that our dear butterfly has about as much desire for work as the Evil One for a daily tub in holy water?

Only, do not mention to anybody that I said this, for if you do I shall certainly say I didn't.

Our household budget, on the income side, reads as follows: Sis earns \$600 a year at the office, and I earn \$1,100 a year at the school. On the outgo side, it reads thus: Cousin Fred earns nothing a year, eats like a stevedores' clambake and thinks like \$5,000,000 in guaranteed trust funds. You can grasp how sort of fitting it would seem to see him landed on a payroll.

Perhaps the memory of his enjoyable talk with Sis still lingered in my cousin's romantic mind, or else a phrase in the article he was reading started a reminiscent thought, for now, as I gazed at him, marveling over his splendid gall, he suddenly looked up and explained in his fine voice:

"Ah, the dignity of toil!

"It does seem, Joe," he went on presently, "with half a dozen prominent and influential young men coming here to see Sis, wearing out our parlor rockers and jerking our doorbell out of plumb—it does seem as if some benefits might accrue to us men of the family."

"You mean like parties? Or loans?" said I, innocently mentioning the possibilities in the order in which he would naturally think of them.

"I mean honest work, old chap. Monson," said Fred, in a voice of gentle reproach, "is in the parlor now."

"Well," said I, "Monson's father is known to idolize him. And the old man is a millionaire—a coal and coke company, fourteen directors, a young trust—"

"But would it be the thing?" cried Cousin Fred dextrously. "Small courtesies one might accept, but would it be delicate to milk one's little cousin's beaux for one's bread and meat? Tell me what you think."

"I don't set up for a correspondence school of etiquette or Miss Beatrice Fairfax," said I, "but—"

"If it only came in the way to ask him now!" cried he. "If it only came in the way!"

As he spoke it came in the way. A knock fell on the folding doors and, to our surprise, in walked Monson. He is twenty-nine years old, is doing well on his own account in the forging business (don't start—ironmongery, not signatures) and has a jaw that is a dead ringer for his famous father's.

"Fact is, Delancey," began Monson, when we had welcomed him, "I've been wanting for a long time to cultivate your acquaintance, and I hope you are going to let me see a great deal of you from now on."

Fred acknowledged the kind words with a few well chosen remarks.

"I feel toward you as an old friend already," continued Monson, evidently speaking by some book I hadn't the index to, "and I want you to know that if there is anything I can do for you, of any kind and at any time, you'll confer a kindness on me by mentioning it."

"Thank you sincerely, old man," said Cousin Fred carelessly, "but there's really nothing. Everything's coming fine for me, I'm glad to say."

"Are you sure there's no little service I might render, Fred, if I may call you so, just to prove my interest in you?"

"Sure," said Cousin Fred. "By the

bye," he continued, picking up the evening paper from the table and absently borrowing a cigarette from Monson, "I see Maude Adams is at the Academy tomorrow night in 'What Every Woman Knows.' They say that's a great show, and I'll bet she'll play to standing room."

"Funny your mentioning that," said Monson instantly, with curious eagerness. "Fact is, Fred, I'm getting up a box party to see her tomorrow—I know her personally, by the way—and I came in partly to ask if you wouldn't join us."

Fred, the shameless hater, made a great show of consulting his engagement book.

"I see I'm free, and I'll trot along with you with pleasure. Last time I saw Maude Adams," he ran on, projecting his boundless imagination into the empyrean, "was at a little luncheon at the Plaza last winter. She wore a beautiful velvet suit, and the young Earl of Montfort, who was also of the party, asked what sort of velvet it was. I said I'd bet him it was Peter Panne. I remember Miss Adams laughed far beyond the merits of my poor little jest, and invited me to tea the next afternoon."

"Ha, ha!" said Monson, and proceeded with businesslike directness to engage Fred for dinner before the show, lunch at the club next day and to see Mrs. Fiske on Wednesday. I couldn't decide whether the man was trying a cunning approach to Sis's good will or was merely the craziest Mr. Mark in America.

"Now remember," he repeated, warmly shaking hands, "I'll take it as a personal favor if you'll call on me for anything—mind, *anything*—you may happen to want."

"If I ever should want anything, old chap," said Fred, a far-away look in his eyes, "I won't hesitate to call on you."

Such was the manner in which our worshiped cousin sued for honest work.

And so, also, began Monson's sickening wooing. The extraordinary rush would have been puzzling enough in any case, but what thickened the mystery was that the young Lochinvar appeared to have dropped Sis altogether. From

that night he never came near her. Fred, on the other hand, he courted with the ardor of a lovesick sophomore. Dinners, dinner dances, theater parties, motor excursions trod dizzily on each other's heels. Possibly no chocolates or violets changed hands, but everything else was positively according to Hoyle. Fred was gloriously happy and borrowed some four dollars from me, in all, for tips and necessary expenses.

Then, in a night, came a right-about-face in affairs, deepening the mystery thicker than ever. All at once Fred dropped Monson as abruptly as Monson had seemed to drop Sis. Incredibly he began to elude the fire of the Monson invitations, declined to go near the 'phone, looked vexed when letters were hurried to him by special messenger, slipped out the back door when Monson's motor was heard stopping at the front; and at last he took to his bed with a sudden mysterious illness, to which Mother and Sis played up with much loving sympathy and toast and egg.

After two days in bed he got an invitation (James answering the 'phone) to go to New York next day with the Wilmers in their private car. He recovered within the hour, and that evening slipped quietly out to take dinner with his hosts of the tour. And just there, as it developed, he made his fatal blunder.

Toward ten o'clock that night (Mother, Sis, James and I sitting in Mother-and-Sis's room at the time) the doorbell rang sharply, and I went down. On the porch stood young Monson, and with him, to my great bewilderment, a clean shaven old man with a mouth like a fox trap and a beak that made the picture of Wellington's look like the futile snub of an angel child.

Young Monson sprang through the door with the air of an invader rushing the breach into a beleaguered city.

"Excuse our calling so late," he cried victoriously, "but we have a sort of a kind of engagement with Delancey at this hour. Not in yet? Let me introduce my father."

Monson Senior said "Humph-humph," and gave me a gnarled forefinger to do my will with. He is an iron-faced old

man, and can pack more savage meaning into a grunt than Tom Watson of Georgia can cram into a ten-minute oration.

We seated him honorably in the parlor, and young Monson and I retired to the dining room, he having signaled me by his eyebrow that he desired converse with me alone.

"You must think I've gone crazy as a chinch, Williams," he began, the moment the folding doors were shut.

"Oh, that's all right," said I. "What're you asking him to tonight—a dinner dance or only a watch service?"

"Dinner dance!" he echoed bitterly. "Look here, Williams, what in the name of heaven do you s'pose I've been driving at all these mad purple days?"

"I gathered that you were trying to give my cousin Fred a pleasant time."

He gave a snort of indescribable contemptuousness.

"You'll never win any prize money in a guessing contest, my friend. I've been trying to give him a job."

At that word the meaning of those enigmatic weeks rolled out before me clear, and I read it the same as you would read half a page of the Rollo books.

"And tonight *I'm going to give it to him!*" cried Monson in a voice of savage triumph. "I've sicked my old man on him—do you hear? And he'll have to shoot himself to get away from me this time."

He sat down heavily at the table and fixed me with an eye that reminded me sharply of Monson Senior's, in the well known photograph which shows him denouncing the district attorney.

"Understand," said he, "your sister didn't ask me to give Fred a job; she's not the kind that asks things. I simply gathered from her conversation that she thought it would be a nice thing to do. In one way it was simple as A B C, for the old man would give a job to any four-legged monkey from the Zoo if I asked him to. But your sister intimated that persons desiring to press employment upon Cousin Delancey must lay on the soft pedal and move extremely

slow, on account of his overwhelming delicacy and morbid sensitiveness about taking favors. And so, merely to get intimate with the rascal, I started out resolutely on the mad ass's career which has landed me guilty in the social column twenty-nine times in two weeks, and lost me the respect of every man in this town but headwaiters and florists. Five dizzy days Fred and I had, during which I carefully avoided even such subjects as labor unions or work tables for fear of shocking him to death.

"Then one day," Monson hurried on, "when I felt that he and I stood together just like an old married couple on their golden wedding anniversary, I nerved myself and broached the dangerous topic. Believe me, I approached it with infinite caution and cunning, but Delancey saw it coming from afar and shied off like a wounded gazelle. 'Slow up there, Monson,' says I to myself. 'You don't begin to appreciate the tender sensibilities of a delicate-minded fellow like this. You must be worthier, you must love more nobly, before you can hope for the sacred gift of his confidence.' Three more days of the rake's progress, and then at last one night, as we sat mellowed over our cups at the club, I suddenly put my arms about Fred's neck, in full view of the audience, and pumped out my secret.

"I told him that I loved him like a twin brother on both sides of the house. I told him, further, that father's coal and coke business was thundering down to ruin for want of a good man in the second assistant secretary's chair, and that father had recognized in him, Frederick Delancey, the one man in all North America who could yet save his pet concern from wreck and disaster. And I implored him, by our ancient friendship, to throw his own engrossing affairs to the winds, nobly leap into the breach and so save an old man's gray hairs from sorrow and the grave.

"I fired so rapidly and embraced him so affectionately that interruption was impossible. And as I warned to my conclusion I saw tears spring into the honest fellow's eyes and knew that my love had overcome his maidenly reserve

at last. For a moment he seemed too much affected to speak, so we sat silently strained to each other's hearts, like the kiss in 'Camille.'

"Then he found his voice and spoke. You know your Cousin Fred," said Monson, "and I need not rehearse his splendid periods, which included a brief industrial history of the world from the invention of fire, and a glorious ten-minute tribute to the friendship of Jonathan and David. In a beautiful peroration, he dedicated the devotion of a lifetime, with such poor talents as he might possess, to the service of my revered sire and his distinguished coal and coke company.

"I replied in a fifteen-minute address of eternal amity and gratitude to God, such as an envoy extraordinary uncorks on the signing of an international treaty. But the gist of it," said Monson, gloomily pushing back his chair, "was that we would call on father next day and sign up the contract."

He rose restlessly and began pacing about the floor.

"Well?" I said, rousing myself. "That was all as you were kind enough to wish it, wasn't it? Where is the gravamen of your complaint?"

"'Gravamen's' a new one on me," said he, eyeing me sternly; "but be that as it may, I have never laid eyes on the rascal from that day to this."

I bowed my head in silence.

"Why, good heavens, Williams, you know how he's treated me!" Monson burst out. "Broke our engagement with the old man the next day, with four others we had through the week, and has dodged me right along ever since as if I was his poor uncle from Arkansas trying to make a touch off him. And the plausibility of his excuses—the diabolical cleverness of his pretexts—all reaching me secondhand by the mouth of your young brother James! I swallowed 'em all whole, thinking he might have had a relapse of delicacy, till he actually took to his bed. Then I understood. I am a dull, stupid, fat-headed man," said Monson, "but that fake illness opened my eyes to—"

"Don't say it!" I cried nervously.

"Little walls have long ears. You've heard of *lèse-majesté*, haven't you?"

Monson stared at me, working this out. "Upon my word," he said slowly, "I don't blame them. Confound him, I must say he's as winning a dog as I ever met."

He turned suddenly and hit the table an excited blow.

"But he's *got to take work*, do you understand? Slip off to New York tomorrow—I don't think! My old man's on his trail now, and I tell you he's worse than a process server. I got him out of bed to nail this job, and he's mad as the devil and—"

"Mind the fern dish!" I called warningly. "May I ask why you're giving yourself, and your father, all this trouble in the premises?"

"Why," said he, brought up with a round turn and suddenly embarrassed, "I thought you understood. Your sister and I had a—little difference that night; and I've got it in the back of my head that if I trap Fred into a good job she—she'll be pleased."

Poor young Monson!

"But as to tonight?" I suggested hastily. "How did you know that Cousin Fred was venturing out for the first time since his illness, and was due to return at ten o'clock?"

"Your brother James," he replied, consulting his watch, "has, I am glad to say, recently been converted to my side. There was a little matter of some mole-skin pants that he desired, and I happened to be in position to accommodate him. He—"

The folding doors opened two inches and a mouth like a fox trap appeared at the crevice, shooting through it an indignant, "Humph-humph!"

I sprang up and reverently admitted the great captain of industry to our little dining room. He eyed me angrily and stumped forward to Mother's chair at the head of the table.

"Humph-humph!" he hurled at me, dropping down into it. And then: "I found it somewhat chilly in the parlor. How soon, pray, may we expect Mr. Delancey?"

"I'll see if I can find out," I said hurriedly.

I shut the folding doors on Monson *père* and *filis*, and leapt upstairs three at a time. Thus I all but collided with Mother and Sis, so silently and so dangerously far were they leaning over the banisters.

We drew each other into their room and closed the door. "Well?" they cried at once. "Well, Joe? Well?"

"Ladies," said I, "kindly get the force pump and the old French brandy, and stand by. Old man Monson is downstairs waiting to give a job to Cousin Fred."

I gave a hasty pen sketch of the situation, and you never saw two more indignant women than they were when I finished. You would have supposed that the Monsons had treacherously sneaked in to put poison in Fred's tea, instead of to offer him light, easy work, with much needed remuneration attached.

"The impertinence of Alfred Monson doing this!" breathed Sis, a becoming color in her cheek. "I shall never, never speak to him again!"

"I have a good notion," said Mother, striving for calmness, "to go down and show them the door. Fred just out of a sickbed, too! What do you think, Joe?"

They walked the floor, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Monsons.

"But Sis," I ventured presently, "you know you told me yourself that Cousin Fred earnestly desired a position."

"Did I tell you he desired a position of the *Monsons*?" said Sis, almost crying with vexation. "Did I tell you he desired the *Monsons*?"—she made it sound like "monsters"—"to break into our house at midnight and club him over the head with a position?"

Poor young Monson!

I extricated myself as soothingly as possible and went to the telephone, where I found, to my surprise, that Fred had left the Wilmers half an hour before. Old sleuth that I was, I next 'phoned to five possible halfway houses where he might have stopped in. Not one of them had seen or heard tell of him that night.

I went back unhappily to the Monsons and sat down with them to the painful vigil. We three sat in a sinister silence and kept the death watch. At first I feebly hoped that the old millionaire might sleep, but one glance at his face was enough to make the hope perish miserably. I have never looked at so savage a countenance. It was evident that the whole situation galled him intolerably. Having promised his adored son to give Cousin Fred a job at all costs, he did not feel free to voice his sentiments about it at all, and the repression of them kept him boiling within like a geyser. Under the circumstances you will hardly suppose that either I or young Monson felt disposed to essay any bright prattle. To speak under the glaring eye of the old man was impossible; even to scratch oneself seemed a profanation of his godlike rage.

The minutes ticked out interminably, and very gradually a singular change came over my feelings toward the situation. I began to feel sorry for Cousin Fred. Well, it did seem sort of pitiful to think of his coming home, so happy and unsuspecting and gay, and walking straight into that dreadful fox trap, from which there was no escape save by the grave.

Where, oh where was he? When I thought it must be nearing two o'clock, and had decided that he had been run over by a steam roller and carted to the morgue, I dared to turn and glance at the clock. It was seven minutes to eleven.

Stars, asterisks, little dots between lines, and seven full chapters.

At midnight on the second night following (eleven-forty by the lying clock) old Monson unlocked the fox trap for a bite.

"At what hour," he said, in the most dangerous voice I have ever heard, "may we expect Mr. Delancey to return?"

"I'll see if I can find out," I mumbled, starting violently.

And I fled away, resolved to return no more to Lucknow till I brought relief in the person of Cousin Fred, alive or dead.

I tipped upstairs, to avoid bringing the ladies about my ears, and turned into

Fred's room at the head of the steps, to try to think out what on earth to do. I sat down wearily on the bed, and there was somebody in it. I rose and lit the gas, and the person in Cousin Fred's bed was Cousin Fred. And after the day's fitful fever he slept well.

Yes, there my cousin lay at peace, slumbering like a Steerforth, his head upon his arm as I had so often seen him lie at school.

I closed the door and touched him on the shoulder. His sleep was sound—hearty sleep of the finest quality—but he woke at once, lightly and completely, and smiled up at me.

"Greetings, old chap! How long did old Monson stick it out?"

I stared at him like a man in a dream.

"When did you come in, if I may ask?"

"'Bout quarter to ten," said he, laughing and stretching in a delicious yawn. "I saw the old duck's umbrella on the porch—a dark green cotton one marked I. G. M.—so I thought I'd just slip in the back way and not bother him. What time'd he make his sneak?"

"Mr. Monson is in the dining room now!" said I in a dreadful voice. "He has been waiting for you since ten o'clock!"

Of course Cousin Fred understood then that his hour had come at last, and considering the great pains he had been at to avoid it, you might suppose that he would take it as a man takes a death-blow. On the contrary, he burst into a roar of laughter.

"That's the best I ever heard," he spluttered. "Old Monson waiting two hours for little me! Oh, that's a dandy!"

I will say that for Fred—he's a philosopher and a first rate sport and ever with a frolic welcome takes the thunder or the sunshine.

He kicked off the bedclothes, as gay as though he were going to one of his beloved parties, and debated a moment as to whether he should stop for a cold bath. It is needless to say that Mother and Sis early heard our voices and came hurrying down upon us; and through the keyhole they spoke comfortably to Fred as he dressed. First they spoke of

sacred freedom, and urged him not to go down at all. And then they whispered him to be of good cheer, since they would go down, too, to stand shoulder to shoulder with him against the invaders and betrayers and die but never surrender. And a good deal more like that, such as "Onward, Christian Soldiers," and "*Sic semper tyrannis*."

In ten minutes all hands were ready. Our little cavalcade swept down the stairs and pushed our battle standard into the dining room.

Old Monson looked surprised and indignant at the appearance of the ladies. Young Monson, springing to his feet, looked astonished and confused. Greetings were close clipped all round, and Sis did not appear to see the young man at all. Cousin Fred entered last, he having as pretty a sense of dramatic values as Mr. Belasco and Mr. Roosevelt rolled into one. He was in full evening dress (my evening dress at that, his own being still unfortunately retained by his "uncle") with a chrysanthemum in his buttonhole, and looked, I must say, very winning and distinguished.

To the ferocious old man he hurried with outstretched hand and a smile which indicated that the little surprise party was the pleasantest episode of a far from unpleasant life.

"Dear sir," he cried, "I cannot tell you how flattered I am that you should have dropped in to see me in this friendly way, or how deeply I regret that, through a little misunderstanding, you should have been kept waiting for a time. Welcome, Mr. Monson," said Cousin Fred, "to our simple little home."

"Humph!" breathed old Monson hoarsely, and if looks could have killed, our cousin was a dead man at that moment.

"I fear the little delay will have tired you, sir," continued Fred with charming hospitality. "Won't you let me offer you something—some sherry and biscuits, say?"

Young Monson stirred uneasily. "No, thank you—er—Fred," said he (rather fortunately, as there were as many crown princes in our house that night as

sherries and biscuits); "we came on business—rather inopportunistly, I fear—and—"

"Mr. Delancey"—the old man's deadly voice cut through his son's like a scimeter—"I have taken the liberty of calling to offer you the post of second assistant secretary of the Consolidated Coal and Coke Company. I trust that you will see your way clear to accepting it."

He tapped the table with a legal-looking document and stabbed Fred foully to death with his eyes.

So, in a wink, we got down to business. And just then all the clocks in town boomed out the hour of midnight. And on the stroke, the folding doors unexpectedly slid open and in stepped the boy James, whom we had all supposed to be asleep. He had the air of being very imperfectly dressed underneath, and neither gave nor received greetings. In entire silence, he sat down in the chair next to Mother's, slowly stared about the room and fell to eating a banana.

It was the strangest scene I ever saw. On one side of the worn table sat the Monsons, implacable hostility in the old magnate's eyes, perplexity and uneasiness in the son's. On the other, facing them tensely, were the entire Williams family, banked protectingly about Cousin Fred, who sat in the middle of us, his two hands clasped by Mother and Sis, a sad and beautiful look upon his face. It was like a scene in a courtroom on the stage when a malicious prosecuting attorney (villain) traps the pure hero to his doom, while the outraged gallery fills the air with hisses.

Somehow the animosity of the old man's voice instantly crystallized all the vague feeling on our side of the table that the Monsons were our deadly enemies, come to beguile our darling to his ruin. Mother gazed into Fred's noble face, convulsively squeezed his hand and said in an imploring voice:

"Dear Fred, on behalf of us all, I again beg you not to let the *unusual circumstances* of this offer affect your decision in *any way*. Probably you have other plans which—which—"

"The work," cut in Prosecuting Attorney Monson inexorably, "is light and agreeable. The salary is fifteen hundred dollars a year."

Fifteen hundred a year for Cousin Fred! Honestly, can you beat it?

"Or perhaps," spoke up Sis, in defense of her blood, sweeping a proud blue eye over young Monson, who started and turned pale—"or perhaps, Cousin Fred, you do not feel strong enough to take regular work so soon after your illness. We needn't tell you what a happiness it is to us all to have you in the house through the day."

"You will have your own private office and your own stenographer," ground out old Monson, as though hating himself for the words. "Every provision that you can suggest will be made for your comfort and convenience."

I suppose the atmosphere of war to the death between our family and the Monsons must have now grown palpable enough to cut with a knife. For the boy James startled us all just here by blurting out in a shrill voice:

"Don't you take it 'less you want to, Cousin Fred. We're all on your side."

Young Monson turned a surprised eye on him, and James glared back at him defiantly.

"If you want the moleskin pants back," he said, not without a gulp, "you can have 'em."

"Two hours a day in the office," swept on the merciless prosecutor's voice, unmoved by these digressions, "will easily see you through. There are no other responsibilities beyond an occasional inspection trip to Pittsburg, perhaps twice a year."

"To Pittsburg!" I echoed indignantly. And at that I, in my turn fell a victim to the stirring pathos of the prisoner's face, and was astonished to hear my own voice saying: "Look here, Cousin Fred! You do just as you like about this thing, you know. We don't want you to feel that there's the slightest pressure anywhere, hear?"

Old Monson shot me through the heart with his bad old eye and flung down his final shaft.

"My son tells me that you have al-

ready expressed your willingness to accept the post. I assume that further discussion is superfluous. Mr. Delancey, I hold in my hand a contract for two years. Will you sign it?"

The fatal moment had arrived. The prisoner at the bar slowly rose, his face very sweet and noble, and I thought I heard a suppressed sob from Mother.

I knew, of course, what Fred was going to do. Though the prospect of two years at hard labor under old Monson must have revolted his soul, yet he did not see his way clear to refusing a well paid sinecure in the full view of the assembled family. And since take it he must, he will take it with a fine grace, as he always took everything.

Yet it was evident that the devoted sympathy of the embattled Williamsses had worked strongly on his romantic imagination, and I could see that the good fellow was picturing himself as Stephen the Martyr outside the city wall, or grand old Socrates reaching for the hemlock while Crito and the rest implored him to cut away for the tube and the Staten Island ferry.

"Mr. Monson and Alfred, and you, dear ones of my own blood," began Cousin Fred, sadly patting the shoulders of Mother and Sis, and evidently enjoying the situation very much—"I hardly know how to express to you the emotions which well up within me as my eye moves over this memorable scene. On the one side I see the kindly magnate, the honored captain of industry, and his splendid son, visiting my humble dwelling at great personal inconvenience to honor me with their flattering proposition. On the other side, I see my own dear family grouped about me in sympathy, lovingly jealous of my welfare, fearful lest I take some hasty step not for my highest good. On both sides, regard, esteem, consideration—I may, say, sir, affection. It is a scene—a demonstration, if I may say so, such as is given to few men to witness. And I confess myself deeply touched."

He paused to clear his throat, and I could see as plain as day that he was preparing to let go a few columns of nonpareil thoughts about the dignity of toil.

But the pause, though exceedingly brief, was his irremediable blunder.

"The hour is late, Mr. Delancey," promptly cut in the thin-edged voice of the enemy, "and we are reluctant to trespass further on your time. Do I understand that you will sign the contract?"

The old skinflint would not even allow my cousin the customary privilege of a deathbed speech. Oh, it is well enough to have a giant's strength, but it is Shakespeare to use it like a giant!

Dear Fred had fought the good fight, and lost. It was all up with him, and he knew it without a glance at the box score. Though clearly disappointed at the stoppage of his oratory, it was with a splendid noble gesture that he flung out his hand for the contract; and all of us felt, upon my word, that our hero was about to sign his own death warrant.

But the fellow's incredible luck had held to the last.

"One moment if you please, Fred!" said a sudden, clear voice.

Young Monson had sprung to his feet. In his honest eye there was a gleam which showed that, after long bewilderment, light and understanding had suddenly come to him, and that he was the boy who would act on them, come what might.

"Father," said Alfred Monson determinedly, "as you see, Mr. Delancey is ready and willing to sign the contract. But now at the last moment a thought occurs to me. He has been long out of employment—if he will pardon my mentioning it—and it does not seem fitting that we should take advantage of his—er—necessities to drive a hard bargain with him. Don't you think, Father, considering his abilities and experience, you should offer him at least five thousand a year?"

I had never supposed that young Monson was so clever. The midnight session ended right there, as he had intended that it should. Old Monson blew up. I will not repeat what he said. He was an old man, suffering for sleep, who felt himself villainously misused, and his swift searching summaries

touching the character of Cousin Fred and his worth to the business world would not be tolerated for one moment in the mails.

He stalked out of the room in flame and thunder, and I accompanied him to the door. I feel certain that he would have kicked me had he not been afraid of his gout.

I returned to the dining room and found young Monson laboriously begging pardon for his father's rudeness. Cousin Fred, leaning against the mantel with his usual gay and well bred air, laughed the apologies aside and gracefully produced one of his inimitable stories.

"Rudest man I ever met," quoth he, "was Swinburne, the well known poet. I called on him once with letters, a couple of years before his death. Swinburne, it seems, was leaning over the banisters, and I'd hardly stepped inside the door when he yelled out, 'Move, now! Get!' and threw a boot down at me, barking my shin a little. I picked it up and sung back: 'Sir, such a shoe fly don't bother me!' Swinburne burst out laughing and told Watts-Dunton to trot me on up."

Mother, her face shining with love and triumph, kissed him good night and retired with James in tow. Sis followed her, and was already at the door, when she suddenly turned back and held out an impulsive hand to Monson. She was wearing the new pale blue, straight all-round, that we had just squeezed out of the table money, and I must say she did it proud.

"Thank you very much," said she, flushing a little and looking very young and pretty, "for what you did for us just now."

Monson took her hand, red as a beet, and stammered out something.

"Alfred," said Cousin Fred affectionately, gazing at the pair with his manner of a delightful fairy godmother, "why don't you drop in for dinner tomorrow—just pot-luck with the family, you know?"

"Oh!" said Monson, abashed as though Fred were St. Peter telling him to come up and take one or two of those

higher seats. "Oh," said he, staring at Sis, "could I?"

"I am sure we should all be very glad to see you," said she.

And thus it was that Monson, having set out to win Sis's good will by giving work to Fred, had won it by rescuing the fellow from it.

He withdrew at last, after shaking hands with Fred and me several times apiece, and my cousin and I were alone in the room. Fred leaned charmingly against the mantel, smoking one of Monson's cigarettes, while I bolted the windows, gathered the papers from the

table and fixed the Baltimore heater for the night. As I rose from the latter task, he turned, laid a well shaped hand upon my shoulder and gazed earnestly into my eyes.

"Old chap," said Cousin Fred, "Alfred means well, but you saw what a mess he made of things tonight. My chance of getting work from old man Monson is gone—that's what it means—and now I must begin all over with somebody else. Man to man, would it be indelicate if I were to broach the matter to young Agonby? Tell me what you think."



TO FOLLY AND WHIM

By Francis Owen

LET the future be dark,
Or let it be bright,
Let us sing with the lark
Ere the fall of the night.
The past, it is dead,
And the future is dim,
Ere the present has fled,
Here's to folly and whim!

Oh, the morrows ne'er dawn,
'Tis always today;
Then before it is gone
Let us sing while we may.
The cup of our bliss
Let us fill to the brim;
With a smile and a kiss,
Here's to folly and whim!



WHEN a lawyer talks freely somebody has to pay for it.

THE MAN'S OTHER WIFE

By Roxann White

MRS. HOLBROOK GRAHAM lay luxuriously amid her laces and pillows and watched, with weary speculation, the April sunlight filtering through the mauve silk curtains which shaded her bedroom windows.

She brought to mind, as she lay there in all the full blown beauty of thirty-three, a rose packed in cotton wool and elaborately tied with ribbon. She was one of those women who could breathe only in the hothouse atmosphere of luxury. Everything in the room bespoke a disregard of economy. The toilet table glittered with silver and crystal; the primrose-damasked walls gave back the morning light in the color of gold; the paneling and furniture of the room were carefully selected Circassian walnut, hand-carved and inlaid with roses in cream onyx. Mauve and gold satin cushions piled the couch and window seats. Jars of deep violet glass stood on the floor, on the toilet table and beside the bed, holding long-stemmed yellow roses. Bowls of iridescent glass were scattered about the room, filled with Parma violets. On the floor were rugs of violet velvet, relieved by creamy foxskins.

A maid entered with a breakfast tray. The woman turned lazily and stretched out a delicate hand for her mail. Mrs. Holbrook Graham slipped the last letter under the pillows and looked with unseeing eyes across the feathery treetops of the Park. Sentences of that letter danced before her eyes:

I feel like Cinderella waiting for the clock to strike twelve. But I love you, and when all is said and done nothing else matters. I will wait for you as usual at the end of the lane.

The woman drew out the letter and read it again. She had not noticed be-

fore opening it that the letter was addressed to her husband. Then—its contents had held her, and she had read it to the end.

The sharp clap of hoofs, the whirr of motors sounded from the avenue below. Far away the muffled tooting of a boat sounded, and suddenly she wished herself upon that boat, sailing she cared not whither, so that it might take her away, away from the terrible something within her.

She rose hastily and rang for her maid.

"I am going out, Marie," she said, when the maid appeared. "I will dress at once."

The New Haven train was crowded—the usual Saturday afternoon exodus from the city. Mrs. Holbrook Graham, heavily veiled, sat wedged into a corner by the window. A heavy man with a spreading newspaper, oblivious of her presence, crowded her insufferably. A few days before it would have been unbearable; now she hardly noticed it. She watched the flying panorama from the window, her lips set, her eyes gleaming. In one hand she held a closely folded sheet of letter paper doubled into a small chunk.

At Stamford she left the train, to find herself surrounded by sweethearts and wives, sisters and mothers, welcoming the returning male. She stood on the platform irresolute. At last, when everyone but a few employees had departed, she entered the waiting room.

"Can you tell me," she inquired hesitatingly of the ticket agent, "if there are any islands near here?"

The man looked at her a moment. "Island? Islands?" he puzzled. "Oh,

perhaps you mean Hart's Islands—a little above here."

"Yes, I think I do," she said. "Do you go down a lane to reach them?"

"I don't know about the lane," replied the man. "You take that street car that's coming around the loop, and change at Brighton's Bridge. The conductor can tell you where to get off."

Mrs. Graham thanked him and started to leave the station. Then she turned back to the window.

"Couldn't I drive there?" she inquired. "Isn't there anyone around here who could take me?"

"Why, I suppose there is," replied the station master. "Somebody at Smith's livery would fetch you out. One of Smith's men is probably outside now waiting for the down train. You might ask him."

She left the station and found a long, lanky youth lolling on the front seat of a surrey.

"Are you from Smith's livery stable?" she said.

"Yep," said the boy.

"Could you take me to Hart's Islands?"

"Two dollars and a half."

"I want to go now. Shall I get in?"

"Yep," said the boy again, turning the wheel a little.

She climbed in, drew the yellow duster over her knees, and they clattered off. The horse was lame, and the boy kept flicking him with the whip. Every time the whip cracked the horse jumped, and Mrs. Graham was jerked forward in her seat to sink back in nervous tension on the inadequate cushions. The sun was dropping to the horizon as they clattered through Stamford under its beautiful elms and out onto the Boston Post Road. The boy roused himself and pointed out to her the houses of Stamford's capitalists.

"Do you often come out to Hart's Islands?" asked Mrs. Graham.

"Yep," said the boy; "I come every Saturday. I bring Mr. Graham out from New York. He won't be up today till the seven o'clock train. I'll just get back in time to bring him out. Don't know him, do you?"

The woman was looking intently at a small piece of paper which she had smoothed out upon her lap, and did not answer. After some time they turned from the main road into an elm-arched lane. Wild roses bloomed along either side, glowing vividly pink against the green of the bordering hedge. The lane turned and wound with delightful unexpectedness, till suddenly rounding a point, it came upon the marsh lands. The acrid smell of the sea swept the nostrils of Mrs. Graham, and she caught her breath quickly. Beyond the sandbar she could see a number of islands, wooded and dark against the setting sun.

"Are those Hart's Islands?" she asked.

The boy replied in the affirmative.

"I will get out here," she said. "I will walk the rest of the way."

"You can't," the boy said; "the tide's in. Over there further it's two feet over the bar. You'd have to wait for it to run out."

"I prefer waiting," she said. "Here's your money."

The boy stared at her, took his money and watched her step onto the damp, sandy road; then, with the wisdom of the mentally unambitious to refrain from philosophizing on the eccentricities of human kind, he turned his horse around, and with a flick of the whip, a slapping of the lines, disappeared around the curve of the road, leaving her standing alone on the marshes.

Mrs. Graham looked about. Before her stretched the low gray-green marshes, the sea, the sky; behind her the lane, with its seclusion of hedge and tree. She turned and retraced her steps until she reached a clump of elders over which a wild honeysuckle clambered. Looking to see that no one was approaching, she carefully lifted back the vine and made her way between the bushes. It was an ideal hiding place; a stone around which the bushes grew formed a good seat. Things had gone better than she had expected. She had found her way easier than she had dared hope. Now, the only thing left was to wait.

It grew cooler. From between the leafy branches she could see the sunset

fading from rose to purple, from purple to blue, from blue to soft gray twilight. She could hear the far-away swish of the water. The salt breeze felt cool to her cheeks. All around little bugs began to chirp and cry. A tree toad trilled in a tree near by.

At last what she watched for appeared. The figure of a woman was crossing the bar from the island. The tide was out now, and the woman skillfully picked her way across the slippery stones, singing as she came. Now and then she stooped to pick up a shell.

Mrs. Graham leaned forward and watched hungrily. Crouching among the elders, she might have been a beautiful tigress awaiting her prey in the jungle.

The girl wore no hat. Her hair was a light, soft brown and blew in little waves around a thin, oval face. Her eyes were dark blue and seemed much too large for the rest of her. She was not pretty, but she had charm and a certain spiritual look. She wore a soft white summer gown, cut low. Her arms, tanned by the sun to a rich brown, were bare to the elbows. In one hand she carried a bunch of pink marsh mallows; in the other she jingled the shells which she had gathered.

As she drew near Mrs. Graham's hiding place, the woman watching could see that the "light that ne'er was seen on land nor sea" glowed in her eyes. There was a look of tense expectancy as she halted directly in front, not twenty feet distant from the clump of elders. Silently she waited, listening. Above the cheeping of the bugs and the far-away sound of the tide, the beat of a horse's hoofs was heard on the road. The girl caught her breath, dropped the shells in her hand and clasped the bunch of marsh mallows to her so tightly that the stems broke. Nearer came the sound of a vehicle around the curve; there was a soft cry from the girl and the next moment she had thrown her marsh mallows aside and was clasped in the arms of Mrs. Graham's husband.

The woman crouched in her hiding place transfixed, witnessing that which she had come to see. Yet, now that it was before her in reality, the horror of it

almost drove her mad. She clenched her hands in her lap, and leaning forward as far as she dared, her eyes took in every detail of the occurrence.

She watched them turn and, hand in hand, make their way across the sandbar. When they had become only dark blots merging into the darker green of the shadowy island, she crept from her hiding place and stealthily followed. Unaccustomed to the uneven ground of the sandbar, she stumbled over the round stones, at times almost falling. It seemed hours before she had traveled what had looked but a short distance and which they had appeared to pass over so lightly.

There was a narrow unrailed walk which stretched from the bar over a short marshy space; under it the water gurgled and sucked up dark and ugly. She was forced by the fading light to pass very slowly lest she miss her footing. She imagined dark shapes crawling amid the protruding grasses and dark ooze. The island rose in a knoll; wild roses clambered everywhere over the gray rocks through the grass. A path wound up the hill into a clump of scrub oaks. Blindly she followed the path, to find herself almost on the veranda of a one-story cottage which stood on the knoll.

The doors and windows were open, and she could hear the deep, rich tones of her husband mingling with the lighter notes of the girl. The room into which she looked was lighted by a large reading lamp which stood in the center of a table piled with books and magazines. The inside of the room was ceiled in a light wood, with the rafters bare. On the bare floor were dark green grass rugs. Soft green hangings were pushed back from the windows. There was a large couch piled with green and pale yellow cushions, above which ran shelves filled with books. Flat against the wall were thrust bunches of peacock feathers, blending harmoniously with the browns and yellows of the wood. A few low wicker chairs completed the furniture. The furnishings were simplicity itself, yet bespoke taste and refinement. On the far side of the room a door opened into a small kitchen. On the left two

more doors led into dainty sleeping rooms.

For a moment Mrs. Graham hesitated. Then she stepped lightly onto the veranda which encircled three sides of the house, and tiptoed around until she could command a view of the kitchen through the window.

There stood her husband, an apron tied around his neck, stirring something in a kettle on the stove. It was clam chowder and gave forth an appetizing smell.

The girl, also wearing an apron, was setting dishes from a small cupboard on the table. This table was covered with a snowy white cloth, on which blue dishes glowed richly in the lamplight. There was a glass bowl filled with roses in the center of the table; a loaf of brown bread lay on a board with a knife beside it. There was a white frosted cake and an Indian basket of strawberries on the wide window sill, near which the table stood.

"There," said the girl tenderly, "is your honey, Sir Sweettooth."

She lifted, as she spoke, the lid of a small covered dish and displayed a bar of golden honey inside.

"Fine!" said the man.

"Yes, and biscuits," she said—"which, by the way, I must look at. I hope they are not burned."

She flew to the oven, whisked open the door, and with a little cry drew out a pan of well browned biscuits, using her apron for a holder. As she did so she struck her bare forearm against the side of the stove. With a cry she sprang up and pressed it to her mouth. The man dropped the spoon into the kettle, and springing forward caught her in his arms.

"Honey—honey dear," he said, "did you burn yourself?"

She laughed a little and playfully shoved him away, saying: "Oh, it's nothing. Just a little burn."

The man stepped back and regarded her, love, admiration, tenderness in his face. The woman outside pressed her hands over her mouth, but was unable to take her eyes from the scene before her. There she stood in the dark, watch-

ing a stranger do for her husband that which she had never done.

She watched them eat their supper in sweet, understanding companionship. Her mind reverted to the many meals she had eaten sitting across the table from him in their elegant Fifth Avenue dining room. How often she had been bored and wished for guests! She remembered how he used to beg her to have a quiet evening at home alone. How many quiet evenings had they had in the past few years? They had been married nine years—nine years!

As she looked in upon the scene the words in the letter which had betrayed them repeated themselves:

"I feel like Cinderella waiting for the clock to strike twelve."

This was what this girl called a ball. As the woman looked she knew that she was gazing upon great love. She who had come urged by the just sense of outraged wifedom now felt like the interloper.

All that evening she crouched on the veranda and watched the different tableaux presented to her. She saw them together clear away the supper things, wash the dishes and set the table for breakfast. Breakfast! How many times had she in the course of nine years breakfasted with her husband? She stood almost near enough to touch them as they sat in the hammock and talked about the stars, the distant lighthouse, the way the moon looked as it came up out of the water, and finally his business.

He recounted to her a few of the discouragements of the day. She received them with sympathetic comprehension which showed they were vital to her, inasmuch as they concerned him. After a time they drifted into a long silence, which was broken by the girl saying: "You got my letter, didn't you?"

"What letter?"

"I wrote to you yesterday; I thought it would reach you before you came. Didn't you get it?"

"No," said the man. "Did you send it to the house?"

"Why, yes," said the girl; "shouldn't I? She isn't there, is she?"

There was a diffident break in her

voice before she said the word "she," which struck the woman listening in the heart.

"Yes," said the man quietly, "she is there. She came home two days ago on her way to Newport."

"Oh!" cried the girl, sitting up in the hammock and clasping her hands together. "Oh! My letter!"

"You needn't worry," said the man, almost sternly; "she isn't that kind."

The girl sank back against his shoulder with a murmur of apology. "I know—I know she is not that kind—but it worries me. Oh, I wouldn't do anything to hurt her!"

"I don't think it would hurt her," said the man, "unless it hurt her pride. It might anger her. But there is no cause for worry. She would never open a letter of mine."

There was another silence, broken at last by the sound of sobbing. The man leaned over, and drawing the weeping girl to him, said, with infinite tenderness: "Yes, honey, I know; I understand. It's very hard, sweetheart, and when I think of it I hate myself for bringing it on you."

The girl turned almost fiercely to him, and taking his face between her hands, pressed her cheek over his mouth.

"Don't say that—don't! I wouldn't give it up. It's worth it all. I haven't taken anything from her. She didn't want what I have taken. I took the thing she threw away. That is the reason I won't accept anything material from you. I want to keep it so—that I only take what is spiritual—your love. She can have all the money—everything. I just want you. Do you know?"—and she laughed in a pitiful attempt at gaiety—"what the Duchess of Manchester said? 'She can have the man; I will take the duke.'"

The man put his hand over her lips. "Don't," he said, "honey. I don't like the simile."

By and by they rose and went into the house. Then it was that, with a smothered cry, the woman who watched slipped from the veranda, ran down the path and picked her way across the sand-bar. How she ever found her way up

the lane in the darkness she never quite knew, nor did she reckon the changes of street car, train and cab which brought her at last to her own room where she had that morning read the letter. Was it only that morning? The remainder of the night she lay in her bed, thinking and picturing the cottage on an island in the Sound.

The following Monday morning found a haggard, heavy-eyed woman crouching in the elder clump. As she expected, it was there that her husband bade good-bye to the girl. After he had gone the girl stood gazing off into space. On her face was written desolation. She held her hands tightly pressed together over her heart, and struggled to keep down the rising sobs. She seemed to be trying to look beyond those weary days of waiting to the time when she would live again in his coming.

After a while she turned and took her way to the silent cottage, followed at a distance by the wife of her lover. She came to the door in answer to Mrs. Graham's knock, and despite the look of surprise in her eyes it was evident that she had been crying.

She gazed at the woman a moment, her eyes large and terrified. Taking a step backward, she unconsciously threw a hasty glance at the breakfast table, which had been set for the morning meal on the veranda. It stood as they had left it, unmistakably set for two. The wife's eyes followed those of the girl to the table; then they traveled back, the eyes of each to the other.

The girl was first to speak. "Won't you sit down?" she said, pushing forward a chair.

"Thank you," said Mrs. Graham, taking the chair; "I will. I am very tired."

"You are surprised," she said, looking up at the girl, who still stood, "to see a stranger in this deserted place?"

The girl inclined her head. "Yes," she said, "I am surprised. But you are not a stranger. I know who you are."

"Do you?" said the woman, looking up quickly.

For a moment there was a silence, as each woman regarded the other. The

older woman rose, and walking to the far end of the porch stood looking across the water. When she turned back she held in her hand a crumpled sheet of letter paper.

"It is yours," she said, offering the paper. "I opened it by mistake."

There was a little note of apology, of pleading, in her voice, and in the eyes she lifted to the girl standing white and sick in the doorway.

"Do you know what this means to him?" asked the girl. "It means his whole business career."

"Yes," said Mrs. Graham, "I know. Publicity would ruin him."

For a moment a glance of hatred shone in her eyes, and she drew back the hand which held the letter. Instantly the girl threw herself forward and snatched the letter from the woman's hand. There was a look of defiance in her eyes.

"I don't care," she said, "for myself. It doesn't matter so much to me. But you cannot ruin him. He has done wrong; so have I. But the punishment you would bring upon him, and which the law would uphold you in, is out of all proportion to what he has done, considering the circumstances. You will have to prove things. A husband cannot testify against a wife, nor a wife against a husband."

The girl stopped, and a sad little smile passed across her face. "See," she said; "I am just the kind you thought I was—a common woman who threatens. But I would be most anything for him. I wouldn't care if he hadn't a dollar in the world. But I know it would kill him; business is his life."

"No," the other woman said tensely, "business is not his life—not all of it. It isn't for any man. I had thought it was. You are a great deal of it—more than I ever was—I see that now. He truly loves you."

The girl had moved nearer and now as she sank into a chair she put out her hand impulsively and caught that of the woman.

"Oh, don't say that! You are wrong," she cried. "That shows you do not understand, and I wish you could. He loves me, but I am sure he never would

had you permitted him to continue loving you. You see, it is this way: I worked in his office; I was his stenographer; I was beside him every day. I wonder if you women know, or ever think, how little you rich wives enter into the real life, the creative life, of the men you marry?"

Mrs. Graham drew herself up a little proudly and slipped her hand out of the girl's grasp. But she did not speak.

"I don't want you to think me rude," continued the girl.

"I shouldn't think you would care what I thought," said Mrs. Graham with weary irony.

"But I do care—I care very much."

"You can hardly expect me to have a high opinion of the woman who has stolen my husband, can you?" asked Mrs. Graham, bitterness in her voice.

There was a slight stiffening in the girl's figure. She had risen to a nobility of purpose in her endeavor to meet the other woman on a higher plane of understanding. Mrs. Graham's failure to respond stung.

"I have not stolen your husband," she said. "He has long ceased to be your husband in the sense that he is my lover. I took only what you had thrown away, what you had clearly shown you did not care for."

Mrs. Graham put out her hand quickly, warningly.

"You do not know," she said. "I cared—"

"Yes," interrupted the girl, "you cared in your way, and believed he was so completely yours you did not need to endeavor to keep him. There was your mistake. Many women make it. There is a great deal of talk about men not keeping up the courtship after marriage. I wonder why there is not more said about women doing the same thing? It seems to me they ought to try just as hard. Men feel it, though they don't know just what it is they miss. And unconsciously all in them reaches out hungrily to find something to fill the void left by the shrinking up of that which you have withdrawn by your indifference. The human heart cannot have its unfilled spaces any more than any other

vacuum. It's an unconscious groping which is purely an instinctive thing and ends by being called immorality and infidelity. I do not condone this—I deplore it; but it must be recognized and met. If I were to tell you that I did not believe your husband loved me—”

“Oh, but I know he does, and you know he does,” interposed Mrs. Graham.

“Yes, he does love me—but not as I love him; nor do I love him as well as I might, were conditions different.”

The girl stopped and looked sadly out across the water.

“Do you know,” she said at last, “I have learned wonderful things in the hours that I have spent here with him; but I have learned more in the hours I have spent here alone. Everything has changed since my coming. I came to this cottage that I might be more with him; I came believing that it was my right. I came in a certain bitter arrogance and defiance of all laws and bonds save that which I believed our hearts had made for ourselves. I was ready to defy the world which I felt had ill treated me. I was willing to take my happiness at any cost. I have read a great deal in my life, and I have come directly under the influence of those two warring questions which make up so much of literature: the courage to take your life despite the world's censure, or the courage to take it in accordance with the world's dictates.”

“You believed that love justified everything, did you not?” asked the wife.

“Yes, I did. But I have journeyed far; I have learned; I see things more clearly. I see now that every conventional rule that has ever been made in this world had its basis in some great moral necessity. The fact that they have lived and persisted in spite of the strong wills which have attempted to wreck them proves to me that there was something of such vital importance to humanity in them they must be acknowledged. Nothing lives of its own volition. It persists to the decree in which truth speaks through it. We talk of love and its justification and living for it alone. There is no such thing; we must have life through which to express our

love. There are laws—invisible laws—guarded by the commonplace things of life, which must be reckoned with.”

The girl had stopped speaking and seemed for a time to have forgotten the other woman's presence.

Mrs. Graham sat regarding the slender girl before her, and suddenly it came to her that she saw her for the first time. The terrible bitterness which had constricted her heart died, and in its place there sprang up a tenderness and understanding of the girl before her. It was one of those moments that mark epochs of growth—a great illumination after the dark hours of agony. She bent forward and sought the girl's eyes with her own.

“He is yours,” she said; “he belongs to you.”

“No,” said the girl sadly, “he does not belong to me; he is not mine; I am only his other wife. He belongs to you and always has. He is bound to you by all those many laws and bonds and instinct of habit and consent which acknowledgment before the world and cohabitation make for.”

She stopped, endeavoring to find means of expression. When she began again her speech was labored. She spoke slowly with painful exactness.

“I see now, though I am unable to explain it as I would wish, that there is something more, something that all these things give, that must be recognized. We must live according to law if we live in this world at all. We accept responsibilities, mold our lives, and we must abide by all our yesterdays. There is something unspoken and indescribable in the bond between a man and a woman who have been legally married. I used to say: ‘A few words spoken over their heads—why should they just for this go on together when love has died?’ But it is not only the words that make for it; it is the spirit of it, the acknowledgment of it, the living it day in and day out, the very habits that it forms on our moral mind. It is all these things put together that go to weld it into a perfect law not to be lightly thrown aside. I can't explain it, but I feel it.

“There is a great need in all of us for

fidelity to the things we have been brought up to believe in. Conventional-ity is the keeper, the custodian of these things. The man I love was never mine. He never could be mine because something in me forbade my loving him to my fullest extent. Despite what anyone may say to justify it, no man or woman can love another out of wedlock as they can within it. It is written. It is the law. We may talk and talk, but there is a little taint, a lack of respect, a blemish of the perfect thing when secrecy is employed to shelter love. Love should be like sunlight, open as the day. If it is not it retards the growth of the soul. I know, for I have felt myself not growing inside as I might have. Seeds cannot grow in darkness. Love cannot blossom perfectly in guilty secrecy."

"But if I went away and freed him," suggested Mrs. Graham, "then you could marry him."

The girl recoiled.

"No," she said; "no, that could never be. I used to wish that it might happen. I know now that it would drag us both down, though we might never admit it even to ourselves. It would—it would always be there."

"Not if you were his legally. I would give him up."

"You can't give him up. It isn't yours to give him up. All those laws which have bound you together must be recognized. You must go on; you must fulfill your promises. You must hang on and fight out together that which you have undertaken together."

The girl, who had been standing, suddenly turned and flung herself down beside the woman.

"Give him another chance," she said. "Give him another chance."

The wife looked the surprise that she felt.

"You mean take him back now? Even though I would, he would not come."

"Oh, yes, he would," said the girl. "Just give him time and a chance. I

will go away out of his life forever. Give him the chance and see how quickly all those laws of which I speak will operate to draw him back into the paths appointed. He need never know you have learned of his infidelity. He has done wrong, but a wife knows how to forgive. He was in need; I filled the need, and he called it love, believing it to be. Don't you see how the girl who works next him, stands next to him in the business, shares his business trials, serves him, is very much a part of his life? There are many secretaries and stenographers who know their employers better than they are known by their wives. They are the real helpmates sometimes. There is danger in it for both of them."

"But what are we to do? We can't be stenographers."

"No," said the girl, "but you can be wives. You can fill up their lives and their hearts so full, through your interest and your sympathy and your understanding, that there will be no room and no need for another. Give him another chance."

The wife now was softly weeping. The girl had left her and walked to the far end of the porch. She stood there and watched the tide slowly creeping up over the gray rocks. When she came back Mrs. Graham had dried her eyes and was drawing down her veil.

"I will go part of the way with you," the girl said simply, and together the two women went down the path. They made their way silently across the marshes and the sandbar. At the clump of elders they stopped. There was a moment of awkward silence. Then the wife turned, and placing her hand on either shoulder, said to the girl: "I will give him another chance, as you have given me another chance." Then she hesitated. "But what of you?"

For a moment the girl's eyes wavered. Then, looking fearlessly at the woman, she said: "Why, I love him."

Then, turning, she was gone across the sandbar.



INVISIBLE FORCES

By G. Vere Tyler

MRS. WORTHINGTON'S son was seated in an upright chair beside her bed, and she was looking especially lovely in pale blue.

She was thirty-seven and he was seventeen. There was no resemblance between them. She was of voluptuous build, a blending of Venus, Mary Magdalen and the Virgin Mary, and he was the image of his father, tall and dark, with classic head and features, hazel eyes that gleamed with intelligence and high purpose and a mouth that had more varying expressions than his luminous eyes. It was an ironical mouth at times, a sweet mouth, a severe mouth; it could even be a cruel mouth, but it was always a beautiful mouth. Mrs. Worthington knew its expressions as well as she knew her own heartbeats, and while she never feared her son, the ironical curving of the upper lip could make her own quiver or bring the tear to her eye.

They had long conversations together, these two, controversies and discussions, but never contentions. The boy always yielded; he knew her faults, which were faults of temperament, perfectly well, but he was helpless in his adoration of her. Never, he really believed, had anything existed quite so luxuriant and altogether glorious as his mother, and it seemed to him that time intensified rather than diminished her charms. Even the Titian tint of her fine hair, that during the past year or so had been most pronounced, and that had at first been so opposed by him, seemed but to heighten and add to her perfection, a perfection that in its ripeness was like the late autumn fruit growing more and more vivid and delicious. Sometimes the boy, in looking upon her, felt that she

held him by the same charm that she held other men who admired her beyond reason, but immediately some unexpected mother instinct would reveal itself and make him feel the sweetness of the tie that existed between them alone.

At present they were summering at a seaside hotel, and for nearly two weeks Mrs. Worthington had been indisposed.

The electric lights were turned off, and only one tiny flame of gas was burning under a crimson globe, as befitted an invalid. A large urn of white roses was on the table beside her head, a vase of scarlet ones on one end of the bureau across the room, and there were other flowers the perfume of which mingled with the scents of extracts and sachets. To the youth who had just come in from the freshness of the ocean it was enervating.

"How dark and odorous you have it, momsy! Shall I turn on the lights and put some of the flowers outside?"

"Clarence, dear—and spoil my effect?"

"Your stage setting?" smiled the boy ironically.

She laughed. "Well, that if you like."

"Aren't we getting a bit sick of it here, mother?" he asked after a pause.

"Perhaps," she replied indifferently, "but everywhere is a bore. This is the best hotel on the coast."

"And to me," replied her son with sudden energy, "it's the worst—the most inane, the most artificial, altogether the most atrocious!"

"What do you mean, dear?" Mrs. Worthington lifted herself with the languor of an invalid, put her elbow in her

pillow, leaned her cheek in her hand and looked wonderingly at him.

While extremely clever as women go, the cleverness of her son was, as it had been in the case of her dead husband, a stumbling block in Mrs. Worthington's way. She had, nevertheless, during his life adored her husband, and what she felt for her son was almost beyond adoration—idolatry.

"Shall I tell you?" the boy asked earnestly.

"Of course—only don't be silly, darling."

"I mean this, mother: of all the abominable places I ever was in this is the worst! I've given it a name—Fools' Hall!"

She laughed again and arranged herself even more comfortably. "Oh! Go on," she said, smiling at him; "I know you have lots to say—I see it in your eyes."

"I have," the boy answered seriously. "We really are in Fools' Hall, and sometimes I feel—well, to me it's a disgrace!"

"Why, my darling, you yourself have declared the beach the finest in existence and the scenery beyond without parallel."

"I have! It happens that insane asylums, sanatoriums, institutions for the blind and so on are always magnificently located. Fools' Hall is no exception, and the surroundings of this place are seen and appreciated by the people hereabout as they are by the insane and the blind."

"We are comfortable," sighed Mrs. Worthington.

"You may be, mother, but I am not! There are times when I realize that outside of this glittering glare there are men and women of purpose, men and women who are suffering and rising—"

"Clarence! Clarence!" exclaimed his mother. "Don't, for pity sake!"

"But I do, mother, and I feel how wicked it is for intelligent beings like you and me to be here among fools!"

"Then you don't class us with the fools?" his mother smiled.

"No; you and I and a few others are the criminals who remain among them and—"

"Yes?"

"Mother, I want to leave this place!"

The woman paled. "But you know," she exclaimed, "you promised to spend the entire summer with me."

"I did and I will—I want you to go with me."

The color returned to Mrs. Worthington's cheeks and she leaned forward and stroked his face. "My dear," she pleaded, "don't be so serious."

"Serious! Why should I not be serious when I find myself one of three hundred people, two hundred and fifty of whom are leading the lives of idiots?"

"Two weeks ago you were quite enthusiastic in your praises of it," Mrs. Worthington laughed.

"I've changed. Here we are living—like animals in a circus; when we're not locked in our cages we're on dress parade or performing tricks."

Mrs. Worthington lay back in her pillows. "Oh, do go on, my dear!" she said. "We're in a menagerie performing tricks; what next? Clarence," she exclaimed suddenly, "what is troubling you? You know it is not this hotel."

"Shall I tell you, mother?"

"Yes, but open the wine first—I was to take two glasses at ten minutes after eight. Look at the clock, darling."

He did so, holding the jeweled thing under the pale flame of the gas in fingers that trembled slightly.

"It's quarter past, mother."

"Then do hurry, dearest."

The boy opened the wine, still with trembling fingers, and poured out a glass.

"It seems to me, mother," he said, handing it to her, "that this indisposition of yours affords a charming opportunity for esthetic posing, an opportunity to be more beautiful than usual in a more engaging manner. You know that you are never so lovely as when you affect to be ill."

Mrs. Worthington was quite used to these speeches and delighted in his frank utterances that always contained a compliment. She also knew that what her son said was true, and that no woman could be as attractive as she in a snowy bed, with velvety blankets and pillow-cases of lace, or on a couch heavily laden

with silken sofa pillows. Up to the present time her son had accepted her reclining, which exceeded grace in its voluptuous ease, as a part of her irresistible femininity, and Mrs. Worthington knew perfectly well why, in the present instance, it irritated him. She put out her ivory hand for the glass and smiled sweetly in his eyes. "Don't talk of me," she said; "I want to hear more of the menagerie."

"I wish the doctor didn't order so much wine for you, mother," he returned, flushing suddenly.

"But he does, my son, and we can't direct doctors. Is the bottle well in the ice? This doesn't seem very cool."

"Mother, I don't like doctors who order so much wine for their patients." A short laugh broke from him. "I don't like this particular doctor—I hate him!"

This time Mrs. Worthington flushed, but in a moment she put out her hands supplicatingly to her son. "But why, darling? He is a charming man and a splendid physician."

"He's a show doctor—a false—"

"Clarence!" Mrs. Worthington raised her hands.

The boy rose, turned from the bed and walked over to the window. The sky was cloudless, and a few large stars shone like jewels. The moon, full and clear, was coming up out of the ocean like a pale-faced woman clothed in gauze, and beneath all this placid heaven beauty was a wonderful earth scene. The boardwalk swarmed with people. The ocean beyond them was dark except for the one silver spot that the moon made, and which resembled a lighted stage where one might expect any moment a marvelous ballet to appear in shining robes dripping with seaweed and salt water.

He stood a long while with a pained look in his eyes and with the beautiful lips severely set, while his mother looked at his tall, graceful form, thinking how like his father he was growing.

At last there was a knock on the door, and Clarence, walking over and opening it, admitted the doctor, who smiled graciously and looked extremely handsome in evening clothes.

"How is the patient?" he asked cheerfully.

"I shall leave you," replied Clarence coldly, "to find out," and he left the room, closing the door softly.

II

THE doctor paused for a moment, keeping his eyes fixed on the door through which the boy had passed. Then he turned to the woman, whose eyes had closed, and who was lying back in her pillows as one in a blissful trance. He fixed an intense and admiring gaze upon the tranquil, lovely face, and her lids parted languidly. The doctor thought for a moment of the physical wonder of a pair of beautiful eyelids parting thus and revealing two glorious shining lights, but what he said to her was, "What a strange youth your son is!"

She smiled. "Why?"

"A bit stern for his age, and also—isn't he rather unsociable?"

"He has been a little strange—constrained—tonight; I don't know why. I think he is getting tired of it here."

The doctor drew up a chair. "He doesn't seem very cordial to me," he remarked.

"Isn't it natural that he should worry at the necessity of my being so constantly in the care of a physician?" she asked naively.

"Perhaps." They laughed. And then the doctor leaned over and looked very closely at her—very ardently into the beautiful eyes. "How are you feeling tonight?"

"Shall I tell you the truth?"

"You must always tell your doctor the truth."

"Yes? Then I am feeling very happy!" She laughed merrily, but a moment later pursed her lips at an engaging angle and glanced at the wine glasses. "Clarence doesn't like your prescriptions," she said.

"But you," he smiled, "you like them—you think they do you good?"

"I? Oh, yes! I have told him repeatedly what a wonderful physician you are!"

"You are beautiful tonight," said the doctor.

She raised a finger. "You're unprofessional, Doctor."

The doctor frowned. "Don't say that; this was your plan—it isn't professional, at all—I don't consider it such—you know that."

"We are only using your professional cloak." Her lids narrowed and her smile was ravishing.

"Put it that way if you like."

"But how else could we have seen each other without making a lot of gossip?" she demurred childishly.

"We couldn't. It was very clever; but don't let us discuss it. You are putting me off—don't you want me to-night?"

She looked at him while a strange wonder lighted her face.

"I do, of course, but——"

"But what?"

"Nothing."

"But there is something—you are strange—different from—well, last night."

Mrs. Worthington lifted the lace of her sleeve and looked through it. "Last night I had not made you any promises," she said.

"Do you regret them?"

"It makes things different."

The doctor rose. "Shall I go?"

Mrs. Worthington was still looking through the lace of her sleeve. She held it between her and the dim gas flame. "If you like," she replied.

The doctor seated himself, ruthlessly took the filmy sleeve from her hand and crushed it in his own. "You know that I can't go. You know how I love you!"

"Love?"

"Yes, you know how I love you!"

"And you know I do not believe in that. We are in an entrancing situation, that is all."

"Entrancing situations provoke love—you, of all women, know that. What else is worrying you?"

"Nothing, only——"

"What?"

Mrs. Worthington freed her hand. "Clarence was so annoyed. I think—I am sure he doesn't like your coming here every night."

"You surely will not consult his wishes in the matter? Selma, listen to me! Don't talk nonsense! Let me kiss you! Last night has lived with me, and the day—all these hours of routine and waiting have been so tiresome."

He leaned toward her, held her eyes in his until they closed, and then kissed her. She prolonged the kiss by putting her hands at the back of his head and then suddenly put him from her.

"Now!" she cried, flinging the hair back from her shoulders, "let me sit up. I want to talk."

"And I want only to love you! What a privilege to visit you thus!" he added gaily.

"And it was all so simple, wasn't it?"

"Anything is simple if one is clever and has ideas—few people have them, you know."

"And I have so many; fortunately they remain ideas. I do not put them into practice—that is, not very often."

The doctor laughed. "Fortunately for me, this time you did. Has your son retired for the night?"

"He did not say good night to me."

"Suppose you go and say good night to him?"

"Shall I?"

"Will you?"

"Perhaps. The wine must be very cool; shall we drink a little? The glasses are over there. Can you see? You can turn on the electric light, you know."

"I can see perfectly. Did you embroider that red shade?"

"Of course not." Their laughter was like an accompaniment and the tinkling of the glasses like some new sort of musical instrument.

"I wonder why I do so love to drink champagne?" she asked, returning the glass to him.

"I know why I love to prescribe it. It makes you so beautiful."

"Won't you drink some?"

"No. It's for you." He poured out another glass. As she took it she raised her eyes to his and he held them again a full moment. Suddenly she put out her hand for the glass. "Life is so wonderful, isn't it?" she asked wistfully.

"Some of its moments are," he whispered. "Before you drink this"—he was holding the filled glass above her head—"will you kiss me again?"

"Perhaps I might after!" she answered back dreamily.

"No! Before!" he argued.

"Do you prescribe it?" Her lips held their smile, but her eyes closed again.

"You are so wonderful," he whispered close to her lips. "I can prescribe but one thing for you, one thing only—love."

"Love!" She opened her eyes and looked at him with a flash of anger. "I have told you I didn't believe in it—that is"—a pained look crossed her features—"not now. Love is a flower," she continued in a nervous voice, "that blooms in each human heart but once and then dies."

"Love is the never failing accompaniment to the music in one," said the man; "there may be a thousand melodies!"

Her eyes flashed again and her lips closed bitterly. She changed her position. "Isn't it perfect tonight?" she said, glancing at the open window. "And just think"—her tones were agitated—"there are moments, nights, hours like this, when one can see all the perfection and feel everything that is around one! Clarence said the tide was going out. Oh, think of the mystery," she cried, clasping her hands, "of the great ocean rolling away from us! It is wonderful, delicious! Does it seem so to you? It seems to me in this moment I can see everything beautiful in the world!"

"You love me, Selma?"

"Love? No!" She flung out her arms. "Women are so silly to love men. They should love themselves, and man merely as a part of their environment—that's what I do! The love flower that bloomed once in my heart is dead—the ghost of it"—she hesitated a moment—"is in my son's eyes! Sometimes I am afraid to look into them. Isn't youth terrible," she burst forth excitedly, "youth clinging to things that cut open the palms that hold to them and leaves them bleeding? Youth that believes in

faith and purity and fidelity! I wish Clarence didn't believe in those things; I wish his youth was dead, but I can't kill it. I often think of it, but I can't—I can't do it!" She sat upright in bed and faced him. "Do you know what my son believes? He believes that no man's lips have touched mine since his father's. Isn't it awful? If he finds out—*when* he finds out—I shall have murdered his youth!"

The man leaned forward and took her hands again. "Do you love me tonight, Selma?"

A startled look came into her eyes. "I love you as *part* of the night."

"No more?"

"I am not capable of more, perhaps," she laughed nervously again; "it is sufficient!"

"Will you go now and say good night to your son?"

She looked at him a moment, then threw down the covers and sprang to her feet, a beautiful, lawless animal, triumphant in the knowledge of the joy her being held.

"Yes," she cried, "I will go! Give me that kimono there on the back of that chair. Do you remember it? I had it on the night you came in and found me lying on the couch. Do you remember?"

He turned, picked up the kimono, a pale thing covered with flowers, and held it for her. "Yes. It was the night after the ball, when you had the attack of heart failure from dancing."

He placed it about her shoulders and then stood looking at her, triumphant, too, in the knowledge of his power over her.

"From dancing with you!" she exclaimed under her breath, and then approached him a step. "Do you know what I thought that night? I thought you were the handsomest man God ever created to disturb a woman's peace!"

He laid his hands on her shoulders. "And tonight?"

"I still think so."

Her eyes flashed into his, and she turned abruptly and left him, moving swiftly and silently to the door. There she turned and gave him one startled glance.

III

THE room she entered was her sitting room. It was unlighted and she passed through it quickly, touching a table and a chair or two as she walked. This room opened into her son's, and at the door she hesitated. In her present mood, to enter his room or come into his presence was distasteful to her, but she banished her qualm, and turning the knob softly, entered. There was no light, but through one window the moonlight was streaming, and in the bright pale aura Clarence was sitting in a large, low arm-chair, his slight form bent, his face buried in his hands, sobbing convulsively. He had not heard her enter, and for a moment the woman stood watching him in silence. Then she suddenly pressed her hand to her heart, that had convulsed painfully, and sprang to his side.

"Clarence!"

The boy leaped to his feet deathly pale, his face wet with tears.

"Mother!" he cried.

"Yes, my darling. What is it? Why are you crying?"

"Mother!" He caught her by the arm.

"What is it, Clarence?"

"Mother, do you love me?"

"Love you? Of course! You know that I do."

His eyes were shining, and he had to her the appearance of an apparition. "And, mother—did you—did you also love my father?"

"What?"

"Did you also love my father?"

"You know I did—that I have never loved anyone but your father. Clarence"—her voice was metallic—"why do you ask me that?"

"Because—because—oh, mother, I love you so much!"

"But I know that, my darling!" Her sweet laugh sounded faintly. "Come now, what is troubling you? Are you ill? If so, then I must do something for you at once."

"You can do something for me, mother!"

"What, my darling? Tell me!"

"Leave here with me tonight!"

She laughed again, and the sound was

so pretty, it filled him with fear. "Clarence! What do you mean?"

"Mother I want you to leave here tonight."

She tapped his cheek. "You silly boy!"

"But, mother, I mean what I say; I want you to go with me away from here tonight—immediately!"

"But, Clarence dear, that is impossible! Don't you know I am not well?"

"Mother," asked the boy fiercely, "do you remember father? Do you remember the day he died—what he said to you? I was only a little fellow, but I heard him, and I have not forgotten. He said to you: 'Selma, always be good; promise me you will always be good!'" His voice choked him, and he began sobbing again. "And so—oh, mother!" He threw his arms about her and put his forehead on her shoulder and began to sob anew.

She felt the wiry clasp of his slender young arms and the silky softness of his dark hair against her cheek, and all her love for him leaped up in her heart and spread through her being like a flame. Her arms closed about him, and they stood embraced and shining in the moonlight like a piece of statuary. But presently another fire began to burn in her, and she pushed him from her and stood looking at him. He was the part of herself that stood in her way. She saw the youth in him that it was in her power in this moment to murder, the youth in him stern, relentless, unyielding about things to which she had long since become indifferent. She saw him clinging to ideals that she had discovered did not exist; she saw him fighting to maintain in her that which had ceased utterly to be and which she doubted was ever in women of her temperament except in the blinded eyes of youth. She saw him ready to snatch from her the red apple she had boldly plucked, and that her mouth watered for. Suddenly she felt dizzy; the room she had left seemed to come toward her and enclose her in all its dreamy perfumed sweetness, and she felt the eyes of the man, the man she had said was "the handsomest man God ever created in the world to disturb the

peace of woman" fixed upon her in a cold commanding gaze that made her tremble.

She put out her hands to her son and her voice was a whisper. "Good night," she said. "I came to say good night; sleep well." She turned to go, but he grasped her by the arm and stared at her.

His eyes were flashing, and in them she saw a look that she had seen once in her own twenty years before, when someone was destroying her ideals, and then she wondered about life. The whole of existence seemed to swim before her eyes, and she wondered why anything mattered and if it did matter.

"Mrs. Worthington, how very imprudent of you!" The doctor's voice was sharp, and the two turned and faced him.

"Let me conduct you to your room at once," he continued. "You must not fatigue yourself in this way."

"Momsy!" the boy said, leaning forward and whispering the word in her ear.

She stood for a moment between the two, the fire each had evoked scorching her into a pallor as of death. For one brief second a glance of hatred flashed into her eyes as they rested on the pale, distorted, pleading face of her son, which had grown old and had in it the look that was in his father's when he was dying and with his last labored breath bidding her always to "be good." All the unconscious cruelty of youth was being manifested in her child and unconsciously perpetrated upon her, and she knew that she was powerless against it, that if she failed to heed his unspoken prayer, she would be the murderer of his youth, the destroyer of something that, while cruel to her, was life to him.

Her eyes flashed from him to the doctor. He also was pale, and an angry, determined expression had closed his lips. Handsome as she had declared him, she had never seen the real godlike beauty of the man as in this moment, when he stood there in the moonlight, straight as a soldier on duty, with the full comprehension of the situation, that

lighted his eyes half with victory and half with contempt.

She stood still, her imagination running riot. In the sharp word spoken by the doctor she seemed to hear the vibrant cry of the male animal, while the look in her son's eyes was a shadow of the misery of martyrs.

"My son is not well," she said to the doctor in a low voice. "I must sit with him a while tonight; he needs me."

In the silence that followed she marveled at her voice, that seemed to come from a distant corner of the room.

"You are quite sure you will be guilty of this imprudence?" inquired the doctor.

"Quite sure," she murmured, and resisted the vibrations that emanated from him, touching her from head to foot and taking her strength.

"Then good night, Mrs. Worthington. I trust you will not suffer for this."

"Good night," she returned faintly.

He turned and left the room, and the boy with a cry attempted to take her in his arms. But Mrs. Worthington had grown suddenly cold to her son. She appeared to have turned to stone as she callously pushed him from her.

A moment later she seated herself in the armchair he had vacated and drew it up to the window with her back to him. Putting her elbows on the sill, she stared at the ocean, where the moon had descended and was now making upon it a shimmering silver path. Presently she saw a man emerge from the darkness and then stand revealed in the bright light of the now deserted shore. A sudden breeze blew in and touched her face and she gave vent to a little cry that was a gasp.

The boy, who had been standing in the dark, sprang forward and knelt before her.

"Mother!" he cried. "Have I offended you?"

She put her hand on his soft silky hair. "Offended?" she muttered vaguely.

The boy looked at his mother.

She was not beautiful. It alarmed him; he rose and stole away from her.



RANDOM REFLECTIONS

By D. B. Van Buren

THE gods make of our pleasant vices instruments to plague us, but we get even by making of our unpleasant virtues instruments to plague other people.

The man of talent can see an opening in the eye of a needle, but there is no barn door wide enough for the lunkhead.

It is a wise suffragette who remembers that the privilege of voting is inalienably linked with the duty of carrying up the coal.

"There are two ways of looking at a thing," remarked the cross-eyed man, as he looked at the Ten Commandments with one eye and with the other watched his hand as it glided into his neighbor's pocket.

No matter how virtuous we may be, it is a natural instinct to think rather poorly of Joseph for his course in the affair with Mrs. Potiphar.

It is the hallmark of respectability to be more afraid of Mrs. Grundy by daylight than of the devil by night.

We are told that "there is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth," etc., which suggests the idea that some men are shaping their course with a view to creating a perfect furore in Heaven—some day.

A glance at the prevailing fashions makes us look back with bitter regret to the primal fig tree, and shows how far we have gotten from Eden.



"WISE men hesitate—only fools are certain," he observed in the course of a conversation with his tender spouse.

"I don't know about that," she said testily.

"Well, I am certain of it!" he exclaimed.

And for a long time he was puzzled to understand why she burst out laughing at him.



MAYBE one has to dig for money because it's the root of all evil.

ISN'T IT KILLING!

By Arthur Wellesley Kipling

SUNDRY things are required to organize a "shoot" in the happy land of France. They consist of a chateau, preferably old and historical, a venerable forest—it would be called a clump of trees in the United States—a few score acres of ploughed fields, several motor cars, a "chef" with skilled assistants, gamekeepers ditto, an old and be-whiskered butler with numerous understudies, the able-bodied male population of the neighboring villages as beaters, a dozen or so of "guns"—"big guns" preferred—and, last but not least, a bank account of wondrous size!

One morning an aristocratic envelope arrives with the *croissant* and coffee, and upon tearing it open out drops a neatly engraved card informing you that your friend the Marquis de X, or plain Mr. Jones, it may be, would be honored if you could join himself and a few friends for a shooting party at his place in the country upon such and such a date. Inclosed is an extract from the time table with the train you had best take, while, if within motoring distance, the most convenient road is also given. You accept—of course!

To the uninitiated it would appear that all you now had to do would be to sit back and wait for the appointed day. Believe it not; such a course would be fatal! When you are invited to a French shoot your first care must be to provide yourself with a *permis de chasse*, entitling you to practise the noble sport unhampered by anything save the local authorities, police, gendarmes and private guards.

Is it easy to obtain a shooting license? Well, not exactly! The first step in the process is to betake yourself to the near-

est *Commissariat de Police* and there be identified by two taxpayers, preferably your butcher and baker—who, by the way, have never laid eyes on you before and have been presented to you by the cook! Nothing else will avail, passport, introductions or documents of any kind; you *must* be identified by two "patented" witnesses—that is the law. Once armed with the document signed by your new friends the tradesmen, and countersigned by the *Commissariat*—it is worth noting that this costs nothing but the annoyance—you proceed to the *Préfecture de Police* and attack a venerable and imposing official who, in return for certain coin of the realm, hands you out a card bearing your name, address, age, place of birth, completely inaccurate details of your personal appearance and an extract from the laws of the land, telling you what you are not allowed to do.

The great day dawns. At six in the morning you drag yourself from a warm bed, don a combination make-up of motorist, cowboy and Arctic explorer, pour some warmed-over coffee into your inner man and, loaded down with gun, cartridges and other supplies, go out into a bleak and foggy dawn to search for an elusive taxi while you shiver like a fly-pestered horse and your teeth chatter like castanets. You feel as if you were coming home with the milk.

The railway station; a return ticket; grumpy, sleepy-eyed gentlemen lugging cases with their bang sticks; a remark from the conductor sounding much like "*Envoituremssieursetdamess'ilvousplait*" and—you are off. The car, ancient as the ark, shabby, wornout and old enough to know better, bumps and clatters abom-

inably as you rattle through a dismal fogscape toward your destination.

You begin to thaw. The rotund titled gentleman opposite discovers that he has met you before; your neighbor on the left tells of past achievements on the sodden field and the keen-eyed, exclusive Englishman in the corner lights his eternal pipe and becomes almost human when he finds we are all bound for the same destination to enjoy a day of "sport." We tell tales of ever growing magnitude from which a fisherman would hide his head in shame, and as the compartment fills with smoke come stories—not intended for the young!

Thank the Lord, the fog has lifted. You run through woods whose foliage has given way to Jack Frost's dainty traceries and at last reach your destination and alight amid a cascade of descending gun and cartridge cases, to be welcomed by your host, who—minor detail—has had two hours more sleep than you, and, well groomed and smiling, leads you to his resplendent cars whose smartly liveried drivers crank their engines and whirl you off at a speed far in excess of the best efforts of the aged and rheumatic train you have just left.

A few miles of rolling country and you swerve from the road, swing through handsome gates and draw up before the mansion whence the start is to be made.

Before beginning the day's work there is an important function to attend: the keen morning air is a splendid appetizer, and you sit down to such a spread as would put many a renowned restaurant to shame. Rare viands and rarer wines, deft service and the best cigars Havana can supply. By the time your last glass of liqueur has been disposed of and the butt of your cigar thrown regretfully into the ash tray, you are more ready for a nap than for physical exertion, but you have come to shoot and shoot you must. After unpacking and setting up your hardware, donning a heavy jacket and pulling your sweater up about your ears and your hat over your eyes, you cast a last, longing glance at the roaring fire and sally out into the pale winter sunlight with your cartridges swung in a leather bag and your gun held in the

hollow of your arm, while your gloved hands are tucked safely away in the warmth of your trouser pockets. The door shuts behind you; brown-liveried keepers take you in charge and you are off for the scene of the first drive.

It is great fun to watch your companions as you walk along—the clean, quick stride of the man from the West, the waddle of the bank director, the mincing steps of the dandy and the "This-is-not-like-Central-Africa-by-Jove-don't-cher-know" expression of our English friend. The titled gentleman throws his gun to his shoulder, squints along the barrels and drops it again as if to acquaint himself with the balance of the piece, but really to show off the exquisite chasing and inlay work on the weapon. If he only dared he would tell you how much he paid for it, but that would be stooping to the level of a "parvenu." Yes, they are an amusing crowd and a jolly one withal. How amusing to laugh at them in one's own mind—and how fortunate not to know how amusing we are to them!

We reach the scene of our first triumphs. A plowed field, like all other plowed fields of the season of the year upon a moderately cold day—that is, not wet enough to paddle a canoe in, yet sufficiently so to provide a heavy squelch should you be so unfortunate as to sit down. Your host who has probably spent several anxious hours in planning out his guests' positions so that all will have a turn at the choicest spots at one drive or another, tells you the number of your screen, and you walk along the line till you come to a card neatly pinned to your place. You are to stay till you see something to shoot at and if possible you are to avoid flooring a beater by mistake. He might feel peevish about it, you know! You load your gun, sling your cartridges ready for use and settle down to while away the time by puffing your pipe, lighted by aid of an evil smelling torch.

Your first care is to take in your situation—and laugh! There you are, hidden behind a wattle screen designed to veil you from your quarry's sight, and you cannot help but feel like those dim

aborigines who used to await the pale-face in ambush with the intention of filling him up with lead.

Next you glance about. The Englishman is your right hand neighbor, and *he* is ready for the sport. His gun is lightly held so that it can be thrown instantly to the shoulder, his tweed cap is pulled over his eyes and his whole attitude betokens a man on business bent. He would eat, drink, dance, or fight the Germans with just the same expression, too. The gentleman to your left wears a different appearance. A long cigar is tucked into the corner of his mouth, and his gun, carefully loaded and *cocked*, rests against the screen before him; it has never entered his mind that should that lethal weapon slip the result might be disastrous. But see; he is manipulating that stupendous cane which has been hanging from the crook of his arm, and which, from the spike at its nether extremity, would lead one to believe that its owner intends to scale Mount Everest or Pike's Peak. No such design has entered his Gallic brain. A spring is pressed, the crooked handle is split asunder and, with the lordly gesture of an explorer planting a flag upon some as yet untrodden point, the cane is driven into the earth and its owner sits down upon the spread-out handle with an expression of beatific joy!

All the guns are in position. A shrill whistle rings out, and an instant later a hideous racket calls your attention to the ground away in front. Red flags are waving in the distance; a line of men armed with sticks is advancing upon you. What does it mean? Are the hosts of anarchy abroad? No; the beaters are closing in and heralding their approach with yells and shouts strongly reminiscent of the pigsty and the paddock.

Bang! The man on the extreme right has fired. Bang! Bang! A miss for his neighbor! Another volley and a chorus of, "*Lapini!*"—which tells you that a rabbit is running the gauntlet of the picket line. You throw your gun to your shoulder; Bunny Longears comes bounding into view through the dust kicked up by the shot. He is in range, and you take careful aim a couple of feet ahead of

the startled quadruped, miss both barrels, and your quarry scampers from sight while the flank guards of the beaters make desperate efforts to head him off and drive him back on the guns.

Now the game begins to come in earnest and the roar of the fusillade sounds up and down the line. As a general rule one shot means a hit and two a miss. You are too occupied to watch the results of your neighbors' efforts, but load and fire with frenzied haste. A covey of partridges drives over, and you succeed in persuading a couple of its members to stop. A hare dashes into sight, turns a double somersault and lies still. A startled pheasant drones over your head; you give him a barrel and he swerves off to the right where somebody gets him by mistake. At least that is your opinion, but later the Nimrod in question will explain how it was only due to his own marvelous cunning and skill.

The beaters come into range and the fusillade draws to a close. The game is collected and piled into a wagon, and you are marched off to another part of the field where the next drive is to take place.

So it continues. Drive after drive is made till you have walked the better part of several miles. Your cartridge bag has grown light, while the weight thus saved is more than compensated by the accumulated mud upon your boots. At last all the ground has been covered and a couple of supplementary drives are attempted upon the old ground where the scouts report a promising collection of game. Then you all gather at the hunting lodge where a repast is served to mark the "half-time" of the afternoon, and your victims are collected and ranged in rows according to their furry or feathery persuasions.

You eat again—there is no end of eating attached to this royal game—and this time you stow away a surprising amount of sandwiches, patties, cake and much liquid encouragement, which is to be had both hot and cold and ranges from the very "soft" lemonade to the "hard" whiskey and soda, while cigars are passed around as an additional in-

centive toward a vigorous anti-pheasant campaign.

By the time the maxim, "Feed the brute," has been conscientiously applied, you are called away for the pheasant drives in the forest, and, with a cigar fondly tucked into the corner of your face, you sally out and walk toward the woods where the hand-raised, hand-fed and unsuspecting birds await their doom. You are again distributed along a long line with your numbers ticketed to the trees, and you are cautioned against the danger of firing into your half-concealed companions upon either side. "An accident happens so quickly, you know"—and that's a fact!

No beaters in sight, not a sound. The familiar whistle, the same old chorus of yells and the noise of sticks whacking against trees and beating up the underbrush. Then comes a startled cry, the flap of wings and the fanlike droning of many birds. On comes the game, by companies, by regiments, by brigades. You load and fire with desperate speed, and, as your gun barrels grow hot, you look with envy on the rotund gentleman who has been there before and has brought an attendant and two guns with him. *He* does not get flustered; as fast as one gun is discharged he passes it back to his man and the spare one is handed up in return.

The fun is fast and furious. It is sport, always excepting the birds' point of view, and you begin to appreciate your host's warnings as to the direction in which you shoot. Your neighbor on the left sees to that.

He reckes not where he fires. He is far too excited. Right or left, up or down, wherever he sees or thinks he sees game he swings his shooting iron and lets fly. Sometimes the dirt spurts up about your feet; then a charge of shot comes in unpleasant proximity to your nose, while now and again a jovial wad thumps you upon the ribs. You forget you are out for fun, forget that it is only play. You are on the firing line; the birds are enemies and your irresponsible neighbor's antics supply a good imitation of hostile bullets and shell.

A brown-clad figure dodging behind a tree recalls you to reality, and you lower your smoking weapon and, joining the party, trudge to another vantage point for the second drive.

Five or six is about the number of pheasant drives indulged in, and then you regretfully realize that the shoot is over and go off to admire the "*tableau*," as the array of dead game is called. Anywhere from one to several hundred head of furred and feathered animals are lined up for inspection, and the head keeper, proud as if he had shot them all himself, bustles officiously about, clearly intimating that a goodly fee is expected from each guest in return for his weeks of work and his sleepless night.

It is all over. A parting glass of "something warm," and you clamber into the cars, which whirl you to the station where, after an enthusiastic parting with your host and the reception of a heavy straw-covered package probably containing a brace of pheasants, as many partridges and a hare, you climb into the same asthmatic train and lumber away into the gathering night. As your little party closes up into the intimacy of lighted pipes and tobacco smuggled from abroad you discuss the sport and marvel at the income which allows the giving of such royal entertainment.

Leaving out of consideration the cost of rental and upkeep of land, it requires a very considerable fortune to organize parties of the kind you have just enjoyed. Pheasant eggs are a costly luxury; they have to be intrusted to the care of cackling hens who rear their novel brood under the watchful eyes of armed keepers who have no mercy for the marauding cat or the thieving fox. When the chicks are hatched, they must be fed on crumbled hard boiled eggs and other dainties and be encouraged to roost in the home woods. They are subject to disease and are apt to freeze to death on bitter winter nights. And all for what? A pinch of smokeless powder, a charge of shot, and you have killed a bird worth almost its weight in gold! Beaters get at least a dollar for their day; keepers get many hundreds a year,

and the taxes are ruinously high. Faith, is the game worth the candle?

At last the train pulls into the terminal; you sling your empty cartridge bag and guncase over your shoulder, tuck your game under your arm and alight. A hurried good-bye to your friends, you give up your ticket and—are stopped by a polite official of the “octroi,” who inquires how much game you have and promptly charges you the

city entrance tax upon it. Such are the laws of France. Whatever you do, you are first taxed for the privilege of doing it and then made to pay on the result!

So, with a light heart which takes no thought of your tired body and the probable cold and indigestion awaiting you on the morrow, you wend your way homeward from a sport that it is given few foreigners in France to enjoy.



LOVE'S ANOMALY

By Caroline Reynolds

I THOUGHT that the highway of love was pleasant,
Merry with music and very fair;
A-shimmer with sunbeams and soft with moonlight,
Sweet with the perfume of roses rare.

I know that the highway of love is rocky,
Scattered with rose petals bruised and torn,
A-shimmer with tears that our knowledge brings us,
Sad with the phantoms of dreams forlorn.

And yet, were I back where our love awakened,
Back to the days when my dreams were sweet,
And you were to open your arms in pleading—
Ask me to choose where the cross roads meet—

With peace I would travel that hard way over,
Knowing the road was my Paradise.
What matter the pain or the toil and trouble?
Life holds its meaning within your eyes.



JASON GREENHAW—Gosh! I wonder how many people they've got packed into that street car?

ABNER APPLIEDRY—Well, the number on the car says 1,627.

LOVE PASSES

By Anne Tozier Prince

SONG ceased for a day;
But the song in her heart trembled on, sweet and low,
Like the sound of slow waters; and how could she know
That the song would not stay?

Light ceased for a day;
But the light of her eyes, the white flame of her face,
Like a silvery starbeam illumined the place
Where she held her still way.

Joy ceased for a day;
But the song and the light made a joy of their own
That held her enthralled on the heights all alone
Till the twilight was gray.

Love passed in a day.
Then the song trembled out, as a web that was spun
And is fallen to dust, for her singing was done;
Nor sunshine nor starshine nor smile of the rose
Could bring back a day that was drawn to its close.
(Love went on his way.)



“**W**HAT’S the difference between vision and sight?”

“Well—see those two girls across the street?”

“Yes.”

“The pretty one I should call a vision of loveliness; but the other one—she’s a sight!”



“**M**Y friend, you should join the church. As the prophet says: ‘Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.’”

“You have already, Parson. I was at your church fair last night.”

DOUBLE CROSS

By Roi Cooper Megrue

CHARACTERS

BILL (a hold-up man)

SAM (a railroad agent)

JOE (a helper)

SCENE—Interior of a small country railroad station. The curtain rises on an empty stage. The telegraph instrument calls incessantly as SAM enters swinging a lantern. He is an unattractive person and has a shifty eye. He puts down the lantern, and goes over to answer the call that is coming in over the wire. Having done so, he brings out a sandwich from his pocket and puts it beside a tin pail of coffee on the table, withdraws a cashbox from the table, takes out bills and tickets and proceeds to balance up the company's cash. BILL enters, quietly drawing a revolver from his hip pocket.

BILL (softly)

Say, sonny, I'll have to trouble you—
(SAM, looking up, gives a frightened start.)
Don't be scared—it won't go off.
(There is a pause.)

SAM (weakly)

Are you a burglar?

BILL

Right you are, sonny—plain, ordinary burglar just like you read about. "Masked man"—that's me—"hold up ticket agent"—that's you. (He starts to take the cashbox from SAM.) Only, take it from me, don't you engage in no struggle with the "armed robber."

SAM

If you rob the company you'll get me in wrong.

BILL

Not so wrong as you'll get yourself in, if you try to stop me.

SAM (hurriedly)

Oh, I'm not going to try to stop you.

BILL (stuffing money in his pocket)

You're an intelligent young man, even if you don't look it. (Pushing tickets back.) These railroad tickets are no special use to me, 'cept that you can give me one to Albany and one to New York, so I can be comin' or goin'.

SAM (taking tickets and selecting two)
Round trip?

BILL

No; one way'll do. (He replaces the revolver in his pocket.) Now, sonny, suppose you split the sandwich with me, and we'll make that pail of coffee into a loving cup.

SAM

All right, if you say so. (Curiously) You've put your gun away; aren't you afraid I'll try to jump you?

THE SMART SET

BILL

No, I ain't. You ain't built o' that kind of stuff. As the sayin' is, you got a wishbone instead of a backbone.

SAM

Oh, you think so! 'Spose you believe I'm afraid of you!

BILL

Right again.

SAM

Well, I'm not.

BILL

All right; then start something.

SAM

What chance have I got against a fellow with a gun?

BILL

Right again—the percentage 's all my way; that's why I carry a gun. I ain't never had occasion to use it—leastways not yet. Of course you always got to begin, so—go ahead—start something!

SAM (*crossly, after a pause*)

Well, you've got all the money and you've swiped my grub; what else do you want?

BILL (*sarcastically*)

Oh, you ain't a bit generous. I kind o' thought you'd show a little friendly hospitality to a stranger who dropped in unexpected like.

SAM

Well, I won't—you've got a devil of a nerve.

BILL

Now don't swear—it shows you ain't got no control of your temper. But at that I'll pay you for the food. (*He hands him a coin.*) Here's a quarter, and it's the most expensive dinner I ever bought! (*SAM takes the money and throws it angrily on the floor.*) Extravagant little cuss, ain't you? Got no sense of the value of money. (*He goes over and picks up the quarter.*) You see, I'm different. I have to take chances to get my money, so I can't afford to waste none on a peevish little guy like you.

SAM

Say, why don't you clear out and leave me alone?

BILL

Well, you seem so kind of hospitable I hate to tear myself away, as the society folks say; but now that I've found the way, I'll drop in again.

SAM

Aw, you think you're funny, don't you?

BILL

No, not specially, but lots of my friends believe I've got a great sense of humor.

SAM

Well, I don't!

BILL

Well, the joke's on you, and that's never funny. (*The telegraph instrument begins to click.*)

SAM

Oh, get out, will you? I'm tired of being kidded.

BILL

Just as soon as local No. 22 pulls in I'm agoin' to signal her—time table says she stops here on signal—and she's due in fifteen minutes. But I stick here till she comes, so go on—entertain me!

SAM (*sarcastically*)

And what'll I be doin' when you stop local No. 22? Just sittin' here, I 'spose!

BILL

Right again. You'll just be sittin' here—tied to that chair with a gag in your mouth; and by morning your arms and feet'll be asleep and you'll be cussin' me—and I'll be blowin' in some of this hard earned money and exercisin' my sense of humor, laughin' at you. Say, do you want me to give you a punch in the eye or smash your nose, so you can show the company what a brace fight you made against the "armed intruder?"

SAM (*emphatically*)

No, I don't.

BILL (*easily*)

Oh, just as you like; I thought maybe if you could show marks of an awful struggle you might get a raise—and I've got a lot of sympathy for us workin' fellers.

SAM (*listening to the instrument*)

There's a call for me.

BILL

Oh, I wouldn't interfere with business. (*They both listen for a few seconds.*) Anything important?

SAM (*suddenly, as the clicking stops*)

Yes; it's an order to hold No. 22 at the switch to let the limited pass. (*He starts to take the telegraph key in his hand.*)

BILL (*whipping out his revolver*)

No, you don't!

SAM

What do you mean?

BILL

Oh, I guess not. Let you wire that you're bein' held up and send for help?

SAM (*earnestly*)

But I got to do it—it's my duty to the company.

BILL

It's my duty to myself to see you don't!

SAM

But you don't understand—if I don't send that order to hold No. 22, there'll be a smashup, and God knows what'll happen.

BILL

Oh, no, that bluff's too easy; how do I know what you'd be wiring? You could be calling that fellow down the road—it's only a mile—or the one from across the river—and then where'd I be?

SAM (*dramatically*)

I tell you, there'll be a wreck—we'll be murderers; you've got to let me send that order.

BILL (*earnestly*)

Are you on the level?

SAM

Absolutely—I swear to God I am! If I don't get that order out now, the limited and No. 22 will meet! One of them will go in the river! There'll be a horrible wreck—and suffering and agony—oh, God, can't you see it—the screams and the people—and the burning cars—and the shrieks? I tell you, I've got to send it—damn you! Let me—let me—I won't let these trains smash! Damn you, put down that gun! Suppose there was someone on that train you knew—someone you loved—think, man, think!

BILL

Go ahead—send it.

(*SAM seizes the telegraph key and feverishly ticks off an order; when it is done he dramatically bows his head on his arms.*)

SAM

Thank God! (*The instrument clicks back a few times to indicate an answering message.*)

BILL

You were on time?

SAM

Yes; No. 22'll stop at the switch—we've saved them.

BILL

We have if what you said was on the level.

SAM (*nervously*)

It was—it was.

BILL

Then I'm glad I let you send that order. I'm a burglar all right, but I ain't no murderer; and even if you're givin' me the double—well, it's too big a chance for me to take.

SAM

You did the right thing.

BILL (*grimly*)

I think so, too—only, if you were puttin' up a game—well, I'll make you pay for it. You see, sonny, I took my chances of gettin' shot or gettin' pinched when I came in here tonight. They were fair chances, though—but if you

tried to get a pull on my heart strings with a fake story, well, then, you didn't play a man's game, but a damned dirty sneak's! Do I make myself clear?

SAM

But what I told you was the absolute truth!

BILL

All right, I believe you—but if I'm wrong, I'll make you pay.

SAM

Well, you'll see I'm right; and it was mighty decent of you to let me get that message through.

BILL

Oh, I ain't such a bad sort—at least, that's what my old woman and the kids say—they think I'm a commercial traveler! And, at that, I *am* a traveler and I'm sort o' commercial.

SAM

You did put it over on me tonight—but some day they'll get you.

BILL

Oh, maybe—but not tonight. Well, I'll be goin'.

SAM (*hastily*)

Oh, don't be in a hurry.

BILL

What's made you change your mind?

SAM

Well, No. 22 won't be along for a while now—and I'm sort of growin' to like you.

BILL

Guess I won't wait for the local, after all; I'm gettin' kind o' restless. That's why I can't work at anything regular—too tame. I should 'a' been one of them old Spanish buck—buckaneers—or what ever you call them; they was regular hold-up men, and they got medals for it—and I'd get ten years. I was born too late. (*Going to the door.*) Well, so long.

SAM

What's the hurry? Stick around and talk awhile. Why don't you quit this

and get a job? It'd pay you better in the end.

BILL

Goin' in for reform, eh? I'm not strong for that. Too much talk, too little action.

SAM

But suppose you was pinched—what about the wife and kids?

BILL

Oh, don't you worry. The old lady's salted away a good bit—they're well heeled. I take my chances—no sympathy owin' to me—I play the game. If I'm pinched, it's what's comin' to me. Sick wife and seven starvin' children and that sort of business. No mushy stuff for me—I'm a hold-up man because I like it and it pays. (*He opens the door and puts the key on the outside.*) So long.

SAM

Don't hurry—I've got something here to drink.

BILL

Never drink during business hours. Thanks for a delightful evening. Excuse me if I lock you in. (*Pointing to the other door.*) You can't get out that way?

SAM (*hastily*)

No, no, no; that's a cupboard.

BILL

Yep, I thought so. Soon as I'm gone, wire a description of me; and whichever way, north or south, you figure I'm goin'—hy, sonny, I've gone the other way. Good night. (*He bangs the door and locks it.*)

(*SAM pauses for a moment, listens, then starts telegraphing; he waits for an answer but gets none.*)

SAM

Joe ought to have been here five minutes ago. Why don't he come? (*He telegraphs again, and as he does so, JOE enters the door at the right. JOE is much the same sort of unattractive person as SAM.*)

JOE (*with revolver in hand*)

Where is he?

SAM (*startled*)

Gee, Joe, you scared me! He's been gone five minutes. Why couldn't you 'a' got here? Now you're too late.

JOE

I hurried. Shall we go after him?

SAM

Us go out there in the open with a guy who can handle a gun like he can? Nix! Our only chance was for you to get the drop on him.

JOE

How on earth did you get him to let you send that message?

SAM

Oh, I gave him a bluff that I was wiring an order to hold No. 22, and if I couldn't send it the limited would smash into her. Oh, I was dramatic as the devil!

JOE

Gee, you're smart!

SAM

Not so bad—and if we'd only got him, probably they'd have boosted our salaries and they'd 'a' had him sent up for ten years. Ain't it a shame?

BILL (*with leveled gun, reappearing in the door at the right*)

Yes, boys, it's a damned shame.

(*JOE drops his gun on the table. SAM simply gasps.*)

SAM

You?

BILL

So I was right, you little skunk—it was the double cross about the limited bustin' into No. 22!

SAM (*nervously interrupting*)

No, no; I was only foolin' just now talkin' to Joe.

BILL

And you are goin' to send me up for ten years and get your salary raised, all because I behaved like a decent man who didn't want to murder innocent men and women and children—because, you little rat, I believed you were on the level.

SAM (*trying to bluster*)

Well, you were breaking the law.

BILL

And I ain't through breakin' it. Now, boys, everything you've got on the table. (*JOE hastily disgorges everything he has, money, watch, knife.*) Now hurry up, you—I ought to shoot you, but it'd be a pity to waste a first-class bullet on you. (*He goes over to SAM and begins searching him, taking out of his pockets money and a watch, a ring off his finger, and finally a revolver.*) Don't see how you ever managed to get a nice little watch like this—and a real diamond in the ring, and more money, too. And all the time you had a gun—and never had the nerve to pull it—I don't see how Carnegie ever passed you by! And it's a fine gun. (*Opening the chamber.*) And loaded, too, with regular bullets, and a better gun than mine. (*He puts SAM's gun in his pocket and his own on the table.*) You ain't got anything more—not even a clear conscience? (*Turning to the trembling JOE*) Ah, my boy, how much have you got? (*He picks up the money from the table.*) Quite a wad, and a watch, too, and a real pretty knife and another gun—well, well, I was right; it was worth coming back for. Good night, boys. (*SAM and JOE do not answer.*) Say, sonny, ain't you wonderin' what made me come back after fallin' for your beautiful pathetic story about the collision?

SAM

Yes.

BILL (*suddenly vindictive, strong and dramatic*)

Well, you sneak, that tried to get me pinched because you thought I believed you—and you swore to God, too, you was tellin' the truth—and all the time you was sendin' that fake message I was listening to you wiring your friend Joe to hurry here and come through the side door and you'd keep me here till he came. You see, I used to be a telegraph operator, too, so I let you dream on; and while you dreamed I was dopin' out my little scheme just the way I've pulled it off, thinkin' maybe the extra haul'd be

worth the trouble. And believe me, boys, it is. Now we'll send the last message that's goin' through here to-night. *(He goes to the instrument and sends a message.)* "I was held up and robbed; the man escaped and has crossed the river—short, dark man with a mustache." *(He cuts the wire. There is the whistle of a train in the distance.)* There comes No. 22; she didn't smash up. Guess I'll have to stop her down the track a ways. *(He picks up the*

lantern.) Now, boys, I'll lock that door, too.

(He crosses toward the door at the right. As he does so SAM raises the pistol and pulls the trigger. The gun clicks. BILL turns.)

You see, I might lose my temper some day and shoot some dirty imitation of a man, so that's why I don't keep it loaded. If I did, I'd 'a' shot you when I came back—you skunk! *(He goes out, leaving SAM and JOE dazed.)*

[CURTAIN]



LIFE AND DREAMS

By Mae Macpherson Brooks

IN dreams there's a land
Where the flowers are red,
And the flowers are kissed by the dew.
A breeze comes by and whispers things
To a butterfly that is blue.

Blue as her eyes,
Red as her lips—
Breeze like a kiss
On her finger tips.

In life the blossoms were bleeding hearts,
The kiss was of ice, not dew;
The breeze was a gale that battered and tore
The wings of the butterfly blue.

Blue were her eyes,
Red were her lips—
Storm that has killed
To her finger tips.



NO one can predict the success of an infant by its first night performance.

THE ROAD TO STARLAND

By Kenneth Groesbeck

MORTIMER CARTWRIGHT had lain awake all night and listened to the quiet breathing of his wife. He had watched the gradual approach of the dawn, marked first by the gray outlining of the shutters against the surrounding blackness and then by a gradual taking shape of the familiar objects of his room. Then his wife stirred and awoke, and he shut his eyes and pretended to sleep. He must have dropped off for a moment, for when he looked again she was bending over the tiny gas stove, and the odor of coffee saluted his nostrils.

He stretched and yawned cheerfully, and she turned at the sound to smile at him.

"What if 'tis but two by four?" he remarked, getting up and waving a graceful hand at the bare walls of their third floor back. "An I have coffee, the world is mine!"

"Not only coffee, Mort," she returned with a laugh she tried to make happy; "see what I have in the ice box!"

And opening the window a moment, she held up a single egg for his inspection.

"With that for breakfast," he said, going over and putting his arm around her, "I cannot fail. Today," he added more seriously, "I am going to see the great man."

"Thornton?" she asked, her eyebrows anxiously raised.

"Thornton himself," he returned gaily, beginning to dress. "I have tramped Broadway for a month, and have offered to play anything from a voice off stage to Hamlet. Apparently there are no more theaters and the playwrights are dead. It's our last chance, Susie, as yonder egg indicates."

She shot an anxious look at him. He had been under a fearful strain, and at times she almost feared his mind would give way with it. She knew how much of his cheerfulness was put on for her benefit.

"Have you an appointment?" she queried, breaking the egg into the hot pan.

"If I made one he'd dodge it," he answered. "I'm going to see him if it takes all day, and if I have to I'll play the game on him I told you about yesterday."

"Oh, Mort!" she cried, letting the spoon fall unheeded. "Don't do that, I beg of you. I couldn't stand it. Don't try anything so desperate."

"My dear," he said seriously, "I know best. It is a risky business, but we are, to put it mildly, in desperate straits. If I decide to carry the plan out, I expect you to play your part without question. God knows we have worked and sweated to make money in every other way, and money we must have. Now say no more about it."

His face was set in determined lines as he sat down to breakfast, and Susie knew that any remonstrance would be futile against the resolution it expressed. She could only pray that he would not carry out his plan.

An hour later he walked down Broadway, which was hardly awake as yet, past the dead electric signs and the silent gilded restaurants staring garishly out upon the morning sun like ghosts abroad out of their time. He sat in Thornton's outer office all the long morning and watched the stream of callers and the favored few who, anxious-eyed, gained the inner sanctum. He might as well

have been the mahogany chair on which he sat.

One o'clock came and found him faint and weary, with his head spinning and his soul dark with discouragement. Then the inner door opened and a gray-headed man, with keen glancing eyes, stepped briskly out and walked rapidly toward the outer door.

Cartwright rose and stepped in front of him. "Mr. Thornton," he said hoarsely, "may I see you a moment?"

"I can't stop now, sir," returned the man who was the greatest manager in New York. "I must ask you to excuse me."

"I must see you a moment," insisted Cartwright. "I only want a minute of your time on a matter of the utmost importance."

Thornton frowned, but the young man held his place in front of him, his eyes fixed on the manager's keen ones.

"Well," said Thornton impatiently, "I'll give you five minutes." And he turned and retraced his steps into his office and seated himself without removing his hat.

Cartwright closed the door carefully behind him and stood before the great man in silence, marking out the pattern on the rug with his cane. Then he spoke, choosing his words carefully.

"I want work," he said. "I can act, and I want a chance to prove it. I've pounded Broadway until I'm desperate. Will you try me?"

"My dear sir," said Thornton with elaborate patience, glancing at the clock, "there are a thousand young men who would tell me the same thing if they insisted on the opportunity, as you have done. I wish I could employ them all. But I can't."

"Do you mean to say," said Cartwright, looking at him steadily, "that in all your enterprises you do not need a single man, no matter who he is?"

"I did not say that, sir," said Thornton, frowning again. "Since you insist on a literal statement, I need one man. But he must be the biggest man in the business. He must have daring, nerve and the ability to play a hard, racking part like he'd order his dinner. There

are only two men I know of in the country who meet my need, and I have written both of them. Are you a third, do you think?"

"How could I prove it to you unless you give me the chance?" said Cartwright, angry at the hidden sneer.

"You can't," returned the other, rising. "The road to starland lies through long, hard work, and not in the ability to keep me from my luncheon."

"You mean you won't try me?" said the young man unsteadily.

"I can't," returned the manager sharply. "If I tried all the young men who want to be stars, I'd have no time to produce plays. Is that all you wanted?"

"Not quite," said Cartwright, coming close to the other and reaching into his pocket. His eyes shifted rapidly and the sweat stood out in little drops on his forehead. When his hand reappeared it held something that glittered, and Thornton fell back with a sharp exclamation, his face suddenly as white as paper.

"I want you to come with me," said Cartwright quietly. "Do I make myself plain? If you obey orders you are safe, but if you don't—well, perhaps you are not so safe."

The other regarded his set face for a moment, his own slowly regaining its color. Cartwright's eyes were like steel, gleaming through his half-shut lids, and his jaw muscles were set grimly.

"I'll come," said the manager slowly. He knew faces, and had studied them for years. If ever he had dealt with a madman, one was before him now.

Those who waited in the outer office saw the two men emerge, Cartwright's left hand thrust into the bosom of his coat, so that anything he held in that hand might have touched the manager's side, as with arms interlocked they walked out of the door.

They were still in this friendly position as they paused before the door of Cartwright's boarding house, and then the narrowness of the stairs forced the manager to precede his host up the long flights until they reached the third floor rear. They entered together.

Thornton looked around him, his senses acutely alive to his danger. Before them, silhouetted against the sun that streamed through the window, stood a girl. Her arms were stretched tensely at her sides, and on her face was an expression of evident apprehension. So they stood for a moment until she broke the silence.

"Oh, Mort!" she said. "How could you?"

"I told you I would," he said sullenly. "He wouldn't give me a chance, and we've got to live. And you shut your mouth!" he exclaimed with sudden savagery. "Sit down there, Mr. Thornton. Now draw a cheque to the order of Susan Cartwright for two thousand dollars."

The manager stared at him, his own face hardening. "So it's only money you want," he said contemptuously. "What if I don't?"

"Ah, then don't," cried Cartwright wildly. "Let's have it all over, here and now. We'll all go together, rich and poor. What's the difference, anyway?" Then there was a faint cry from his wife, as he deliberately cocked the shining revolver he held in his hand.

"Put it away," said Thornton, as he drew out his chequebook, his voice unsteady in spite of himself. "But why Susan Cartwright, if I may ask?"

"I wonder?" said the other with a sneer. "So that she can cash it while I keep you here, of course. And to shut your mouth when I get the money, too. I guess you won't want to talk much about the cheques you've drawn to the order of a woman!" He laughed again cynically, and Thornton, his lip curling contemptuously, wrote the cheque and held it out to the girl.

She looked at it fascinated a moment, and then shrank away from it as if it had been a live thing. "I can't do it, Mort," she said, her voice low. "It's wrong. Let him go. I can't do it."

Then he went over to her and shook her savagely. "Confound you!" he said between his shut teeth. "You she-devil, you do it or I'll call in witnesses! And I'll swear he gave you the cheque because I found you together." He

laughed gleefully. "Ah, then, Mr. Thornton, the papers wouldn't take it up, would they? They wouldn't publish anything about the greatest manager in America, would they? And your wife and your little girl—they'd love it all, wouldn't they?"

The girl stood up slowly, her eyes blazing. "You coward!" she said. Then, with a change of tone, "Oh, Mort—you wouldn't do that?"

"Ah, wouldn't I?" he sneered, throwing his head up wildly. "Why not, pray? Haven't I slaved and wrung my heart to support you? Haven't I climbed miles of stairs to be denied admittance to men like this one here? He is rich, successful, honored; and I—who am I? A poor beggar of an actor, only fit to mouth lines in a town opera house! Year after year I've watched others succeed while I failed. Now I've got the best of 'em trapped where he can't stir. Will you go?"

"No," she breathed.

There was a wild light in his eyes, and he sprang to the door. "All right," he cried. "Have it your own way. Tonight the papers will have it with all the decorations. I can see the headlines—"

Then Thornton turned to the girl with a desperate gesture.

"Go, for God's sake!" he said, his face white again. "Take it. He's mad. There's nothing else to do."

The two men watched her as she turned despairingly to the shelf with its hanging curtain where she kept her outer garments. Her hands trembled as she thrust the pins into her shabby little hat, and when she was ready she turned again to her husband and held out her hands imploringly. He did not answer her, but his face expressed such savage anger that she shrank away, and Thornton, alarmed for her, thrust the cheque into her hands. Then the door closed slowly behind her.

"Curtain!" said Cartwright briskly. Then as his wife reentered he tore the cheque in two and handed the pieces to Thornton with a bow.

"Will I do?" he said.

The manager stared at him a moment, and then drew a handkerchief from

his pocket and dried his moist forehead.

"What is it?" he said simply.

"Why," said Cartwright, "you wanted someone with nerve—to carry off a part like he'd order dinner—so we arranged a little show for you."

"And none of it's true?" said Thorn-

ton slowly, like a man awaking from a dream.

"None of it," said Cartwright—"except that we need the money."

The manager rose from his seat with a long sigh. "You shall have it," he said. "For heaven's sake, let's go to lunch!"



THE QUEST

By M. Favereau Nelson

WHAT seek you, restless soul of me,
Across the desert, o'er the sea?

I seek content—content.

*But seas and deserts hold it not;
To journey farther is my lot.*

What seek you, soul that knows no rest,
Upon the verdant meadow's breast?

I seek content—content;

*But find it not among the grass,
So I must onward fare. Alas!*

What seek you in the city's throng,
O soul that journeys far and long?

I seek content—content.

*Yet it eludes me; spent and sore,
Say, must I wander evermore?*

What seek you, soul that never sleeps,
Within these loved eyes' crystal deeps?

I seek content—content.

*The eyes allure, and they are dear;
Still I must go—it is not here.*

What seek you— Nay, that place is dread;
It is the haven of the dead.

I seek content—content.

*'Tis the last place. I am o'ertired,
And— Lo! 'Tis here—that I desired!*



BARNEY McNAB

By Sampson Rourk

"HELLO! What're you doing in here?"

The intruder had been standing before the table at the head of the mail car, studying the labels on the letter case and mumbling to himself. At the sound of my voice he jumped. Like an animal suddenly beset and cornered, he darted a glance at first one side door and then the other, but they were closed and locked and gave no promise of escape, so lifting a pale, frightened face he began a whining explanation.

It was not difficult to identify in this man McNab the much discussed former railway postal clerk, and when with something of curiosity I stepped into the nimbus of light and began to look him over, he seemed visibly to shrink under my scrutiny. Banishing all thought of the hour's sleep I had hoped to get at the car before beginning my trip north, I threw my grip upon the table and opened it. Promptly the man's attention was arrested, and he began to watch me with keen, covert curiosity. When I lifted out flask and glass he regarded them for a moment with deep, hungry aversion, then turned his head away. Reaching under the table, I pulled out a chair and pushed it toward him. "Sit down," I said, reassuringly; "don't mind me—not at all." I smiled invitingly at him. "But you must have something first. This is fighting stuff—fine—do you good." I pushed the bottle over.

For a moment the man looked dubiously at me; then with an epileptic movement he reached for the liquor, poured a generous drink and with a tremulous bend of the elbow gulped it down. As the fiery rye percolated the man and warmed him and brought a

fleck of color to his face, he settled gently into a chair and closed his eyes.

It was perhaps three minutes before he stirred again; but the second his eyes opened his gaze wandered restlessly until it settled on me, then with somnambulant rigidity he pulled himself up. For an instant he considered my face thoughtfully; then a wise, sly, smirky expression covered his own. He twisted his mouth, cocked his head to one side and regarded me with a shrewd, calculating calmness. Suddenly he leaned forward in confidential overture: "Do you think—"

"Think!" I interrupted airily. "Why, man, that's my business. I'm past grand master at the art. Now out with it, McNab."

The man blinked his watery eyes, drew in a deep breath of surprise and took another drink. "M-m-m-mis-ter—" He turned a questioning eye on me. "You have the advantage of me; you—you know my name."

"Martin K. Jessup, railway postal clerk," I replied, blandly; "and you are Mr. B. J. McNab."

The man looked interested; he leaned impulsively forward. "You know my name all right. Everybody knows my name. And everybody thinks they know me, too; but they don't. Nobody ever did. I say it myself; and I ought to know, oughtn't I?"

I nodded my head.

"Well, they don't know me; they don't know why I got out of the service and fell down and went to smash. They don't know that, but they would like to. They tried to find out, too, and they did a lot of guesswork. But they didn't guess right, because a man can go to

pieces for lots of reasons. And I didn't propose to tell. If I didn't tell 'em, how could they know?"

"Couldn't," I acquiesced.

"Nobody knows why I went to smash; but I don't mind telling you." Here he paused and looked up. His eyes brightened, and when he spoke his voice was clearer; he even took on a spurious lightness and bravado, as if to impress me with his erstwhile social prestige.

"I was a gentleman once—you wouldn't believe that now, would you? Well, I was. And I was one of the star men on this same route—old man Planter was the other, and there was none better than him. They spoke of us as Planter and McNab, and together we stood way up. I'm not bragging by saying that, am I? I don't mean to brag, you understand. I did seven States—worked 'em down fine. Everybody spoke about it. And my exams—I put 'em up clean—one hundred per. Not slouchy, eh? I should say not!

"There was another man on our route, and he was ambitious. You've heard about him—Rem Stokes. Well, he was a newcomer—swung to us from another division and started to buttin' in right away. I didn't pay much attention to him till something happened. Something's always got to happen, you know, before you get wise. They were about to make a change; our route and the next were to be merged—450 miles long and a crew of five men to a car. Don't you see what that meant? Four head clerks—two of 'em for us. Well, I was awake all right after that. Then I began to hear about Stokes. It wasn't Planter and McNab any more; it was Planter and Stokes. Everybody was talking about Stokes—saying he was great and would get my promotion—him a rank outsider, rushing in when I wasn't looking and trying to grab a head clerkship. And I was the last to get onto him—nobody ever told me about it, you see. I admit—you heard me say I admit—I was lazy. But there was nothing in sight—no prospects, nothing doing; so I was just bumming, killing time, when the jolt came and scared me almost to death.

"At first I was rattled—didn't know what to do. But I finally figured out that, no matter what I did, there was a chance"—he nodded his head emphatically—"that I would get it in the neck. So I began to think about it. You see, I was naturally a smart man—too derved smart for my own good—and I knew I could think of a way to stop him. I might have stopped him in the right way, I guess; but I wasn't a good sport—wouldn't take a chance—not unless it was cinched—a sure thing. Don't ever hunt for a sure thing; you'll overreach yourself. I overreached myself—now look at me! Nobody would ever believe that I once had ambition or had deliberately started out to do a man. But I made my plans perfect first; then I went after Stokes.

"I have told you one reason why I meant to put Stokes on the bum—you heard me say *one* reason, didn't you? Well, there was another—a woman. I meant to get the head clerkship; then I meant to marry the woman. But I had to get the place first. So I decided to take no chances."

The man sat in melancholy silence for some time, pondering and blinking at the lamplight.

"The plan—I told you about the plan," he finally resumed. "It was a little thing. I meant to get him a calling down—you know who—I mean Stokes. Nothing very bad in that, was there? Very well, nothing very bad in that. You know what mislabeling a pouch means. Anybody can mislabel a pouch; just a little mishap—nothing lost. Still it don't help to a head clerkship; but I don't have to tell you that. Well, Stokes was booked to make a mistake. The Super didn't like a mistake to happen to a pouch; he would jump on you for it. When the Super jumped on a man he didn't turn 'round next breath and recommend that man for promotion."

The man paused and his aspect suddenly changed. He pulled his chair nearer, blinked significantly at me, and with a hint of mystery in his voice, said:

"Once a funny thing happened to me. I captured a string; it had a short harpoon tied to one end and a compressed

air tube to the other. A man had tied them together to sneak a pouch out of my car. I saw the pouch cross the aisle, crawling toward the door. When I got down there the man ran away. I kept the air gun and didn't report the matter; but I told some of the boys about it. See where I am now? I meant to play the trick on Stokes—sneak a pouch out of his car and change the label. I had it all worked out.

"I want to tell you about Stokes. He was a newcomer, but he had his friends—I admit that—he had his friends. And those friends used to stand around the post office and talk about me. How'd I know that? How does anybody know things? I knew all right. What did they whisper for, if it wasn't about me—and laugh out loud? And they did other things to me, too. They thought I was already down and out, and they started in to take liberties with me—that's what they did. But I'll say this for Stokes: he was always on the square. What'd he do? Well, he used to do things to me all right—do 'em right along. But he was open in what he did. When we came in contact he had a queer way of looking into me. He could do it; I used to feel him at it.

"One night where do you suppose I met him? I was calling, and ran against him at her house—you know whose—I mentioned the lady, I believe. Trying to cut me out, that's what he was doing there. Well, he sat there as cool as a cucumber and glued his eyes on me, looking into me. I couldn't stand it—he got my nerve, and he'd have got my plan, too, if I'd stayed."

McNab reached over and helped himself to a drink; then he cleared his throat. "I was telling you—lemme see. Well, I hated Stokes worse than ever after that night. It wasn't a question any more of right or wrong; it was whether I was smart enough to land what I wanted. And I wanted that job." A deep emotion began to stir the man; moisture broke out on his denuded pate; his eyes burned. "But I decided to take no chances. And I didn't.

"Stokes was on No. 36, and it was ten o'clock at night. She usually slowed

down at the edge of the town and crawled till she got to the crossing. She had to stop there till the signal changed. The night Stokes was to make the mistake I was at the crossing. I could see him at the case, tying out. His back was turned; the lower side door was open; it was easy. I had two pouch labels in my pocket and the harpoon gun in my hand. I aimed at a pile in the bin and got a good fat pouch first shot. In a flash it was out of the car, the label changed and the pouch fired back. But the train didn't move; I had another label and sent in after another pouch. Just as it reached the door the engine gave a jerk and flirited it out of the car. I caught a glimpse of canvas—blue and red stripes and a big brass rotary lock. What do you think of that?"

The man gave me a look of utter disgust and stopped.

"A registered pouch," I said, and waited.

"When I saw what I had caught," he went on, "I made a fumble and dropped my knife. How could I cut the harpoon out without my knife? Before I could think, the tail lights flashed in my face—the train was gone. After a long time I found myself crouching in the dark, my nerves fluttering like rags, me hugging that pouch. At last after a minute or two—maybe three minutes—I began to move—creep forward, stealing from shadow to shadow, scared almost crazy. I didn't know which way I was going, but I had to move—get away—anywhere. Then something moved; my heart almost jumped out of my mouth; I dropped the pouch and started to run. But I looked over my shoulder, then stopped. It was a shadow. I went back and picked up the pouch again. After that my eyes searched everywhere—me ready to run at the first sign of danger.

"There was a saloon on the corner; I had spent money in there—knew the owner. It had a side door; I began to sneak toward it. Just as I was about to reach out, I darted back into the shadow. A woman came out and went down the street. After a while I mustered courage, slipped into the hallway

and into one of the little rooms. The saloon man knew I was in the service, so I tried to look cool and natural as I threw the dope into him. . . . What? Sure; that was easy. Talking to my friend at the car—train moved off with a jerk and pouch tumbled out—stumbled over it after train had gone—awfully careless in my friend—cost him ten days if the officials got onto it—saw a chance to scare him. After that I'd let the pouch turn up—nothing in it, anyway—lot of second-class matter, mostly newspapers. That was the dope; he swallowed it all right, too, and agreed to keep the pouch—took it upstairs right away. When he came down I ordered drinks for the house, then went home.

"Well, I didn't sleep that night, and by daylight I knew just what I was going to do. I had gone too far to turn back. Nobody intended to rob the mail—sure not. I wasn't a thief; I was only trying to stop Stokes, that was all.

"I kept away from the office during the rest of my lay-off—four days. Then my run began. The first trip up I began to hear things. People told me the pouch had been stolen. I agreed with them; had to keep suspicion away from me, didn't I? Some of the wise ones wondered if Stokes was smart enough to get away with it. I shook my head and looked wise, too. Where was the harm? I could fix it up—sure I could; but the time wasn't ripe. Yep, that very day things came my way. Big white envelope from Department at Washington—you know—I was head clerk. My run ended Thursday night, six days on the road. Next morning I went down to the office to look things over.

"Say, roaring, hungry hell had busted loose in that office! The boys huddled about in groups, waiting. Scared faces sidled up and breathed huskily at me—congratulating me, you know. You'd think it was a funeral; everybody was on edge, and kept watching the door to the postmaster's room. I began to watch it myself. A strange man came out of that room; he went over to the Money Order Department, then came back. Then another came out. I counted three, all

inspectors. At last the door opened and Stokes staggered out. They had just finished with him—two hours on the rack. His face—say, you'd hardly know that face—it was a sight; he was a sick man. When he passed I stepped out and spoke sorry like: 'Rem, I'm sorry to hear 'bout this. Can I do anything?'

"He stopped, turned and looked at me. I'll never forget them eyes—they began to dig into me like little animals. And maybe he didn't scare me stiff! My nerves and muscles got limp—just shriveled—and my heart stopped and waited to hear him denounce and accuse me—and the inspectors over there in the room waiting and anxious to pounce on somebody and run 'em upstairs before the Commissioner. Say, mister, that was a trying moment in my life. I prayed to God to stop him—put a seal on his lips—strike him dumb—anything to stop his tongue. I swore if He'd only do me that one favor, I'd never call on Him again. And I pledged to get the pouch back in circulation within twenty-four hours. That prayer was answered. Stokes didn't say a word—just held both hands up to shut me out from his sight; then he staggered out.

"But the boys back of me were silent as death. I pulled myself together, and when I turned tried to look calm and sympathetic. 'I'm awful sorry to see him in such a bad state. Say, boys, can't we do something?' What do you think of that? I had made up my mind to swing the pouch that night. Things was getting too hot—too many inspectors on the job. If they got onto that pouch, who'd believe that it was an accident—that I hadn't planned to rob the mail? Sure, I had to act at once.

"Dark seemed like it would never come; I couldn't do anything till night. I kept away from the post office—kept away from my home, too. I had to be mighty careful—didn't want anybody to strike my trail—not much I didn't. They had my nerve; I was afraid.

"How'd I kill the rest of the day? When I came to myself it was night and I was in the street. It was drizzling; the streets were deserted—not a soul in

sight, not even a light, except the street lamps on the corner. The town was like a graveyard, and the clanking of my heels on the pavement made the silence deep and awful. I began to creep forward on my toes. When I reached the railroad crossing I could see my friend of the saloon putting up his shutters; then one by one the lights went out. A clock struck, and I jumped; it scared me. It was twelve o'clock. Then a dog barked; it seemed like every dog in town had to answer. It was an evil sign. I felt sick and crouched there in the dark, undecided what to do. At last I began to steal forward again, and a moment later was in the room, slouched down in a chair, the sweat rolling off me, but I shivered and my teeth chattered. The saloon man looked at me, then set liquor and glasses on the table. 'What's happened? Anything wrong?'

"Friend, that question brought relief. I took a drink. 'I must get that pouch out of here tonight,' I said. 'It's got to turn up in the morning.'

"How?" he asked.

"When No. 74 rolls under the shed, that pouch's got to be discovered on it."

"Would you believe it, that man didn't move!"

"Say, I've got to act at once," I added.

"I was wondering what you want me to do," he said slowly.

"Get that pouch," I came back at him quick. 'I don't need any help.' I was getting excited, but blamed it on my nerves.

"In a sudden rush, ain't you?"

"Ten days ain't a sudden rush," I replied. 'A man's 'bout to lose his living. Besides, the inspectors are on the job. If that pouch don't show up before morning, they'll turn this town upside down.'

"That man dropped into a chair and looked thoughtful for a minute; then he took a drink. 'Things must be pretty bad,' he said after a while; 'seems like I ought to play safe in this little game. What guarantee do I get against a come-back?'

"A guarantee!" I said. 'My word and honor.'

"Better bring along one of them inspectors. If he gives his word and honor, too, I'll feel safer"; and he laughed—actually laughed out loud.

"But I knew he wasn't serious; he was only testing my nerve. Bring an inspector! God, no! He knew I couldn't do that. I sat speechless, fascinated, just staring at him. Suddenly I caught his eye and saw humor twinkling and dancing in it. Then I understood. 'My God, man, you're great!' I said. 'What an actor you'd make! I admit you had me on the run all right—scared stiff.' Then the humor in the thing got to me and I began to laugh—think of that—me sweating blood, shivering and laughing! 'By Jove—a great joke! The laugh's on me all right. But say, don't do it again to me—don't do it to anybody; it's too serious. If this thing got out I'd blow my head off. But it's a great joke, though. You had me going some—you sure did,' and I laughed again.

"Say, man, this ain't no little joke. I'm giving you straight goods, understand? They ain't nabbing me for no shady business with you."

"There ain't no shady business," I said, 'and your joke has gone far enough. Let me have that pouch at once.' I meant to be stern, but I guess my voice was only pleading; I felt like I was dying.

"The man shook his head. 'I got to play safe. Nothin' doin'."

"A wild terror gripped me. I tried to speak, but when my mouth opened the sound wouldn't come; then when it did I didn't know my own voice. 'My God, man, is it blood money you want?'

"I ain't got no right to run any risk," he declared.

"I'll make it \$200," I cried, my voice shaking dreadfully.

"Guess I'll stand pat," he declared. 'I don't trust you. You brought that thing in here—said it fell out o' the car. You lied. I heard all about that pouch the next day. You're both a liar and a thief.'"

McNab stopped; a wild uncontrollable, human emotion gripped and shook him. "Don't you see what he was

about to do to me?" he cried, excitedly, as he half lifted himself out of the chair. "He was going to put the sign on me, and there was no way under the sun that I could stop him. I pleaded—offered him \$500—\$1,000—\$1,500—every cent I had in this world; and he laughed at me—laughed! He thought I was helpless—too much of a coward to rise up and kill him—yes, that was it; and he laughed." Gradually McNab subsided—sank limply back into the chair and raised his skinny fingers to shield his face. "He thought I was a coward," came from behind the hand, "so he laughed."

Suddenly the hand came down and the man was out of the chair again. He stared and licked his bloodless lips. The cords in his neck and forehead stood out and worked convulsively; his eyes blinked faster. "He thought I was a coward," came in a half-smothered, heated breath, "so he laughed. Then murder flared in me, and I sprang at him. 'Stop, you fool!' he hissed, shoving his hand in my face. 'Ever see one of these? Automatic—every time I move my finger it fires a shot—ten of 'em. Don't even have to take it out of your pocket; convenient, ain't it?' and he laughed again."

"I want that pouch," I said doggedly.

"Still want it, eh?" His eyes smiled, but his voice made me sick. "All right, you shall have it." He stepped back, and in a flash I got what I wanted—Almighty God, didn't I get it! He threw it on the floor before me; it was flat as a pancake, as empty as the glass there on the table, slit wide open—slit from end to end and its contents gone. Then, friend, I knew it was the end of the world for me. I was a thief—a thief that had been robbed—a mail robber, robbed by another robber. The air in that room got suddenly stuffy; then it became stifling. I had to gasp for breath; my brain began to reel; I staggered to my feet and out into the night and the rain."

The man stopped; a terrible calm settled on him, and he stared solemnly at his hands.

After a while I moved. "Well?" I said, and waited.

At this he looked up wearily. "How'd I get home? You can search me—just found myself there, that was all. I had six days lay-off, and somehow pulled myself together. I was in bad, and for a day or so lived in holy terror. But nothing happened, and I got easier. I found out that the real thief had gone, and knew they could prove nothing on me. I wasn't even suspected; why should I run? Sure, I was safe."

"They reduced Rem; cut his salary, too. He fought 'em. But how could he win? He was up against it, and booked; but they didn't fire him—they wanted to keep him in their clutches. The inspectors were convinced; they knew."

"He was bunched in with my crew." McNab's face wrinkled into a horrible grimace. "He kicked—told 'em he wouldn't stand for it. The Super jumped on him and he lost ten days. Then something happened that took all the fight out of him. The inspectors had been digging into his past and turned up something—trouble he'd had fifteen years before, when he was a boy—in jail, or something like that."

"That settled Stokes on our route. You'd think he had smallpox, the way the boys fell away from him—say, it was fierce. The thing got all over town; things like that travel fast. And everybody began to shun him—all but one woman; she stuck up for him—wanted to marry him, too. But he was sensitive, had pride, and wouldn't let her. Then she blamed me for it, and said things about me, too, which I don't propose to repeat."

"People will talk, and they did Stokes up brown; it took all the heart out of him and he locked his face tight. He reported for duty and worked hard—waded into things like he was afraid of being fired. Then he'd forget and stand staring at the window. I watched him—was always watching him. But he kept away from me—never came near the letter table. And I kept away from him, too; so did the rest of the crew. Sometimes I'd catch him staring at me

with a dazed, bewildered look on his face. Then suddenly he'd wake up and rush things with a desperate sort of frenzy. He stuck it out three trips, then gave up. The last trip he was eyeing me nearly all the time. It upset me some, too. I wasn't certain of anything—kept me digging into the Postal Guide—scared to trust my own memory. Once I found myself looking up a post office that seemed familiar. After I'd found it and traced it out on my scheme, it came to me that it was one of the principal stations on my own route. Pierce, wasn't it?

"When we reached the other end, I was the last to leave the car. Just as I started out, the door opened and Stokes stepped in again; his face was like chalk, but he looked me straight in the eye. 'One word with you,' he said. 'It's impossible for me to work under you—you know why; I don't have to explain. The officials think I'm a thief. A thief's got no business in the railway mail. Better look up someone to take my run; if you don't, you'll go in stuck.' With that he was gone, and nobody ever saw him again."

McNab relapsed into silence. His watery eyes blinked and his chin trembled. He poured himself a good-night drink, then reached for his hat.

"It does seem indecent," he paused to

declare, "to let the world go on thinking that Rem Stokes was crooked. He wasn't, and I want you to tell 'em about it. Just say we were victims, but were honest in what we did. Be sure and tell 'em Barney McNab wasn't a mail robber. And tell 'em Stokes didn't run. You'll fix it up—fix it up kinder nice for us both—fix it up."

Suddenly the man crumpled up. His face became featureless and stodgy; his eyes glazed, and his chin trembled; he clutched feebly at the rack as he staggered down the aisle. At the door he pulled his hat down on his head and looked back. "Tell 'em Rem was an honest man, and Barney McNab didn't mean any harm. And if I could only find out—" The man reached out for the door. "If I could—"

"One moment, Mr. McNab," I called. "You want to find out something. What was it?"

The man paused and turned. "If I could only find out—what do you think became of Rem? How did he kill himself?"

I shook my head. The man stepped out into the night. "If I could only find out *that*—if I only knew for *sure*—I'd go and—" As he shambled down the platform and away from the car, with his receding footsteps his mumble became inarticulate and indistinct.



NURSE—You have been badly hurt, and I must give you an alcohol rub.

PATIENT—Are you sure I am not hurt internally?



"WERE his stories too long?"

"Yes, and too broad."



NO envy is so keen as the envy of an unsuccessful friend.

THE LOST GARDEN

By Louise Driscoll

I WOULD know it, could I find it;
And before I reached the gate,
I would catch the smell of roses,
Where the fragrant hedge encloses
And the fair white lilies wait.

Tall they were, the hedge and lilies,
When my little feet ran there;
And I laughed and played beside them,
But the weary, long years hide them,
Though I seek them everywhere.

Oh, my heart went out before me
As my feet went through the gate,
And my heart goes out today
When I cannot find the way,
And my tired feet are late.

Somewhere it is sweet with flowers,
Gay with little winds and song,
And the sun falls on the dial,
And the lilies open while
I remember, love and long.

*Oh, the years are built about it;
It is walled by time and truth.
Out on some faint, distant star,
Where childhood and memory are,
Lies the Garden of Your Youth.*

I would know it, could I find it;
And before I reached the gate,
I'd escape long years and pain
And would be a child again,
Where the tall white lilies wait.



YOU can recognize a girl of good taste by the style she doesn't put on.

HISTOIRE AFFLIGEANTE DU GENDARME INDULGENT

Par Pierre Mille

L'HIVER avait été pluvieux, mais tiède; et bien qu'on fût à la fin du mois de janvier, à travers l'herbe pauvre, des perceneige sortaient déjà leur tête.

Sous les arbres, qui comme un treillage entre-croisaient leurs branches au-dessus de la Bresle étroite, sinueuse, et dont l'eau très pure paraissait noire à cause des feuilles tombées, naufragées depuis des mois déjà et pourrissant au fond, ces premières fleurs de l'année sortaient par touffes leurs petites urnes blanches, frileuses, sans parfum, mais comme émerveillées qu'il fût assez tiède pour que s'accomplît le mystère de fécondation gardé par leurs corolles candides. La terre moussue, quand on y posait le pied, rejetait l'eau comme une éponge, et l'air était encore tout plein de l'odeur des choses qui lentement s'étaient décomposées sur les rives, au cours des mois mortels, des mois sans chaleur et presque sans lumière, où la végétation s'arrête. Mais parfois cependant, durant quelques secondes, le vent du sud apportait avec lui, comme une nouvelle, des senteurs de résurrection levées très loin, dans les pays où les plantes s'étaient mises à bourgeonner.

M. Cormenot descendit prudemment jusqu'à la berge.

Ayant reconnu la place qu'il avait amorcée la veille, il commença de monter, à petits gestes patients et adroits, sa belle canne à pêche à quatre brins, terminée par un scion d'épine noire et un autre en bambou fendu. Il y fixa sa ligne, terminée par une racine de Florence, solide, nerveuse d'aspect, et un

hameçon unique, tout neuf, couleur des élytres d'un scarabée bleu.

Comme, pour pêcher le gardon, il méprisait le blé cuit des pêcheurs vulgaires, il posa sur cet hameçon une boulette légère, de la grosseur d'un pois, faite de mie de pain, de miel et d'*assa-fatida*; et, ayant pris la profondeur de l'eau, à la sonde, il descendit sa ligne de façon que l'appât demeurât libre, à dix centimètres du fond à peu près... Et puis il n'y eut plus dans son âme qu'un calme passionné, une espèce d'ivresse sereine: il pêchait!

De l'azur et du gris tombaient alternativement sur ses yeux, du haut du ciel. Parfois une ondée ruisselait sur le coutil imperméable qui recouvrait son gilet de chasse et son gros caleçon de laine molle; et il ne voyait plus rien que le flotteur en liège qui, sur l'eau, tremblait sous l'averse; mais il attendait patiemment, sachant que le poisson vient mieux à l'appât après la pluie. Parfois, au contraire, le soleil brillait, les arbres dénudés, au-dessus de la rivière paisible et noire, prenaient dans le lointain une teinte lilas très douce, et de temps en temps un gardon ou un chevesne mordait: c'était la grande bataille, le dual, moins inégal qu'on ne pense, entre le poisson qui se débattait, furieux dans sa douleur, et l'homme qui l'amenait lentement, suffoqué, jusqu'à l'épuisette, puis à la gibecière pleine d'herbe mouillée. Alors M. Cormenot mettait un nouvel appât, le bras fier, et tout exalté encore par la vigueur patiente déployée dans la lutte.

Cependant il entendit, au-dessus de sa

tête, des pas qui se rapprochaient, à la fois prudents et majestueux, sur l'herbe molle. Il se retourna: un gendarme était là qui le regardait curieusement. M. Cormenot n'en fut nullement inquiet: il ne pêchait pas en temps prohibé, la Bresle est à tout le monde, et sa conscience, enfin, ne lui reprochait rien. Le gendarme, d'ailleurs, demanda seulement, d'une voix sympathique et basse, comme s'il avait eu peur d'effrayer le poisson:

— Ça mord?

— Oui! répondit M. Cormenot d'un silencieux signe de tête.

Il abaissait des yeux satisfaits sur la gibecière ouverte où les beaux poissons s'agitaient encore: les gardons luisants, presque semblables à des carpes, mais plus minces; les chevesnes jaune pâle, avec une tache noire. Leur dos était d'un vert sombre qui passait au bleu sur les côtes; leurs flancs et leur ventre luisaient, d'un blanc de nacre qui frémissait dans l'agonie. Le gendarme, ayant regardé à son tour, déclara que c'était une belle pêche.

Tout à coup, le flotteur fila, faisant un angle droit avec la rive, et plongeant avant même que M. Cormenot eût ferré. La longue canne plia, si brusquement qu'on eût cru qu'elle allait se rompre. Mais M. Cormenot, bien qu'ému jusqu'au cœur, avait pourtant gardé son sangfroid. Les lèvres pincées, il laissa le flotteur fuir aussi loin que la ligne le permettait, tira, rendit du fil de nouveau. . . . Du vert très vif et de l'ocre moirés, des reflets blancs, des nageoires d'un vert éclatant, une tête forte et effilée, voilà ce qui apparut enfin à la surface de l'eau, au moment même où le poisson capté donnait de sa queue un si formidable coup que M. Cormenot en eut le bras presque démanché. Encore une fois il rendit du fil.

— La belle pièce! dit le gendarme, la belle pièce! Ah! si vous alliez la perdre!

Et il tendit lui-même l'épuisette quand la proie bondissante revint près du bord. Prisonnier, le poisson remplit le filet, dont la hampe ployait sous son corps. On vit sa tête verte, sa gorge plus verte encore, couleur de prairie, ses yeux jau-

nes et ses lèvres jaunes qui claquaient désespérément.

— Comme il est grand! dit le gendarme d'un air d'admiration. Il est grand, grand . . . comme un de mes pieds! Et qu'est-ce que c'est? Je n'en ai jamais vu comme ça.

— C'est un ombre! répondit M. Cormenot, qui se vantait de connaître tous les poissons de France. C'est un ombre-chevalier. C'est un poisson rare, ici; il aura été enlevé par les inondations. Et il faut qu'il soit désorienté, affamé, pour avoir mordu sur une boulette.

— Ah! fit le gendarme d'une voix toujours très douce, c'est un ombre-chevalier? . . . Bon Dieu de bon Dieu, que c'est embêtant!

— Pourquoi ça? demanda M. Cormenot, qui continuait à regarder sa prise avec orgueil.

— Du 15 octobre au 31 janvier, c'est interdit, la pêche de l'ombre-chevalier: décret du 18 mai 1878. . . . C'est interdit, interdit! Il faut que je vous dresse procès verbal. Bon Dieu de bon Dieu, que c'est embêtant!

— Mais je ne l'ai pas fait exprès, voyons, de pêcher un ombre-chevalier! s'écria M. Cormenot. Ce n'est pas ma faute si celui-là s'est pris à ma ligne! Ça se pêche à la mouche, d'abord, l'ombre-chevalier, et je pêchais à la boulette. Je vais le remettre à l'eau, si vous voulez.

— Il mourrait de sa blessure, dit le gendarme: pollution des cours d'eau! C'est interdit, Bon Dieu de bon Dieu, que c'est embêtant!

Toute son attitude révélait une infinie compassion, une bienveillance attendrie. L'espoir rentra dans l'âme de M. Cormenot. Il tira une pièce de quarante sous de sa poche.

— Non, non, monsieur! fit le gendarme, érudant l'offre d'un geste, mais sans indignation. Ne vous inquiétez pas. Une contravention, on la dresse, mais ce n'est pas une raison pour que l'affaire suive son cours. J'arrangerai ça: on n'est pas des brutes. Je dirai les circonstances de la cause. Pour un ombre-chevalier, perdre une si belle pêche, quelle misère!

— Perdre ma pêche? . . . interrogea M. Cormenot.

— Eh oui, dit le gendarme, il faut que je la confisque. Bon Dieu de bon Dieu, que c'est embêtant!

M. Cormenot doutait qu'il eût, dans l'espèce, le droit de confiscation. Mais il ne protesta point, espérant que l'abandon de ses prises finirait d'amollir le cœur de ce gendarme si poli.

— Vous ne confisquez pas mes instruments de pêche, au moins? fit-il avec un sourire et pour bonne mine.

— Non, monsieur, non, dit le gendarme. On n'est pas des Turcs. Emportez tout ça, allez!

M. Cormenot, étouffant mal un soupir, commença de ramasser ses boulettes d'appât et la caisse où il avait mis ses grosses boules d'amorçage.

— On voit que vous savez pêcher! dit le gendarme, flatteur. Qu'est-ce que c'est que ces boules-là?

— C'est le mélange Florent, un mélange antique, mais le meilleur, déclara M. Cormenot avec un peu de vanité: du croton cascarilla, de l'argile, de l'écorce d'encens, de la myrrhe, de la farine d'orge détrempée dans du vin, du foie de porc, de l'ail et du sable fin. C'est merveilleux. Et ça ne sent pas mauvais, c'est délicat.

— Et ça amuse le poisson, ça le grise, fit le gendarme.

— C'est idiot, de dire que ça le grise, protesta M. Cormenot, c'est absolument idiot!

— Bien sûr, bien sûr! concéda le gendarme toujours benévole. Allons, au revoir, monsieur, et tous mes regrets.

— Gendarme, interrogea timidement M. Cormenot, est-ce que ça suivra son cours?

— Ne vous inquiétez pas, dit le gendarme, c'est des petits malheurs. Vous avez votre conscience pour vous, n'est-ce pas?

M. Cormenot avait sa conscience pour lui. Et ce gendarme avait été si poli qu'en rentrant chez lui il ne songeait plus guère qu'à la perte de sa pêche et de sa gibecière. Ce fut donc avec une profonde stupeur qu'il reçut, quelques jours plus tard, une assignation à comparaître devant le tribunal correctionnel de Brantes, "pour contravention aux ordonnances et décrets sur la police de la

pêche, délit de pêche, injures à un agent de la force publique et tentative de corruption d'un fonctionnaire."

— Ah! le cochon! gémit M. Cormenot en pensant au gendarme.

Toutefois, il espéra encore, au fond de l'âme, qu'il n'y avait là qu'une erreur. Sa bonne foi ne pourrait manquer d'éclater au grand jour de l'audience, et on saurait bien comment les choses s'étaient passées. Mais on n'avait pas idée de mettre autant de mensonges dans une citation. Celle-ci avait été mal rédigée, on n'avait pas compris le procès-verbal, sûrement!

L'attitude du gendarme, qu'il rencontrait faisant les cent pas, en grand uniforme, sur la place du Palais, le confirma dans cette opinion. La candeur, l'indulgence, la bonne volonté étaient peintes sur les traits de ce modeste serviteur de l'Etat.

— Quelle surprise! dit-il, allant tout droit à M. Cormenot. Hein? Ça a donc suivi son cours! Je ne l'aurais jamais cru. Faut-il qu'ils soient rosses, au Parquet! Mais j'arrangerai ça, allez, j'arrangerai ça; je témoignerai en votre faveur.

L'espérance rentra dans l'âme du pêcheur inquiet. Et quand on appela sa cause, il attendit, avec confiance, les explications du gendarme.

Le gendarme prit, en effet, la parole avec aménité.

— Le 22 janvier 1910, dit-il, j'ai dû dresser contravention à l'inculpé pour pêche, en temps prohibé, d'un poisson qu'il a reconnu être un ombre-chevalier.

— Par exemple! s'écria M. Cormenot, c'est moi qui lui ai dit le nom du poisson. Il n'en savait rien, ce gendarme. Ah! que j'ai été bête!

— Sur mon observation que c'était un poisson prohibé, poursuivit le gendarme, l'inculpé ici présent m'a répondu avec légèreté que c'était plutôt rare d'avoir le bonheur de le pêcher dans la Bresle, et il n'a manifesté aucun regret. Lui ayant alors dressé procès-verbal, il a tenté de m'offrir une pièce de deux francs, et, sur mon refus, a voulu dissimuler des boulettes d'amorçage dont il a dû ensuite m'avouer la composition enivrante, per-

nicieuse au poisson. Lui en ayant fait reproche, comme étant contraire aux décrets et ordonnances, l'inculpé n'a manifesté aucun regret de sa conduite et m'a donné le nom d'idiot, étant en uniforme et verbalisant dans l'exercice de mes fonctions.

— Ah! cria M. Cormenot, la cr. . .

Mais son avocat le fit taire, craignant qu'il n'aggravât son cas.

M. Cormenot s'entendit condamner à trois cents francs d'amende et à un mois de prison "seulement," le maximum étant de cinq cents, "en considération de ce qu'il avait encore subi aucune peine," et de ce qu'il était de bonne vie

et mœurs, ce que fit valoir son défenseur. Celui-ci s'empressa de le suivre hors du tribunal, craignant que son client ne se livrât à des manifestations funestes. M. Cormenot, en effet, s'était précipité sur le gendarme.

Mais le gendarme le regarda venir avec un air de bénignité qui donnait quelque chose de sublime à sa figure à la fois douce et mâle. Et avant que le condamné eût ouvert la bouche:

— Hein, fit-il, ils vous ont salé! Mais je connais le geôlier de la prison, et si vous voulez. . .

M. Cormenot refusa d'en écouter davantage.



VERS À LA FIANCÉE

Par Henri Thuile

D'UNE feinte douceur écoutant ma tristesse
 Je jette au cœur du soir ces lys qui se sont tus,
 Devant le port ancien et lourd, plein de caresses,
 Au fond du dock désert et des bassins perdus.

Je ferme le doux ciel à l'écluse du rêve,
 Et ton front délicat où des anges sont nus,
 Sur ma peine déjà lointaine et sacrilège,
 Que d'autres ont causée sans que tu l'aies connu.

La mer en s'élançant sur les môles robustes
 Déchire ses poings blonds sans accrocher les murs,
 Mon âme te ressemble, ô rocher au grain rude!
 Le temps n'est pas plus fort que mon amour n'est sûr.

RUSHING THE SEASON

By George Jean Nathan

THE king of theatrical indoor sports in America is the announcing of plans for the coming season. Inaugurated probably in 400 B. C. by Aristophanes, when that playwright caused a messenger to emanate from his working chamber and spread slyly among a certain element of the Athenian population the whispered tidings of the newest parchment with which he was then engaging himself, the pastime has flourished to a present day degree that surpasses even such other popular forms of amusement as worshipping Bernhardt with fanatic uncontrol, dismissing Brioux with a scornful stomach grunt and overestimating the dramatic achievements of the late William Vaughn Moody. All one needs to indulge in the great theatrical sport is much blank paper and more blank courage. Thus it has come about that at this ante-season period the public is annually treated to the finest exhibition of promises this side of Goldfield, Tonopah, Bullfrog or the nuptial altar.

There was a time once when the public took these announcements as seriously as it is now seeing fit to take so-called "all star" casts and unstockinged dancing females whose only well founded claim to esthetics rests in manicured toenails. But as year after year passed, and breaches of promise came thicker and faster in the theatrical world than in Troy, Lowell, Allentown or any other locality fertile in factory girls, the public began to kick itself in the shin, wake up and bathe its eyes with boracic acid. Accordingly today, when Mrs. Leslie Carter announces that she is planning to play "Hamlet" next season, the public is disposed to regard

her Attic annunciation with the same share of belief that it vests in the pronunciamento of a certain manager who says it is his firm intention to produce plays by each of the young American dramatists.

In rushing a forecast of the arriving season into print for the readers of this magazine, I have found myself confronted with the problem of sifting from out a grand total of four hundred and thirty-six new plays announced for presentation that portion which seems destined actually to be born on our stage. A week since, I called Maharama and Escupius, my favorite crystal gazers, to my side and bade them exercise the deepest care in presenting their analyses to me, and I likewise impressed upon Rego, my private astrologer, and Herman, my masked outrider, the necessity for extreme caution in the preparation of their reports. Their papers lie before me. They have done their work in a manner that assures me the princely monthly wage I bestow upon them is not misspent. But I am a generous employer; and if perchance an error has insinuated itself into their labors, it shall not be I who shall hold it against them. With the possible exception of Rego, they are but human.

From these reports, I deduce that the coming season will be notable primarily for productions made on a big scale; for an almost complete and gratifying elimination of the conventional Gallic sex drama; for a permeating vein of the melodramatic; for an equitable opportunity afforded any worthy native dramatists to get an ear for their goods; for Mr. William A. Brady's applaudable effort to inaugurate a capable repertoire

program at the Playhouse; for a particularly high grade of imported light musical fare, and for an exiling from the American stage of any lingering splotches of smut and leprous sensationalism. Maharama has pointed out to me that the proscenium exploitation of several dubious Amazons at the hands of equally dubious "angel" gold—the rottenest canker in theatricals—is again inferred in our statistical analyses; and he has beseeched me to give these enemies of a clean stage fair warning of an attacking pen months in advance. I grant his request. But all in all, gentlemen, the field seems a prosperous one, and the cloud-hidden sun of the retreating months bids fair to blaze forth again in the throbbing season that is now off Sandy Hook and about to come up the bay. A little music if you please, Professor! And now we will begin:

David Belasco's first offerings will be a comedy drama by W. C. DeMille called "The Woman," and a psycho-spirit play entitled "The Return of Peter Grimm," with David Warfield in the stellar role. The latter product is the joint work of Cecil DeMille and Mr. Belasco. "The Woman" deals with the effort of a corrupt Congressman to get a bill favorable to Wall Street interests through the House, with the fight made against him by a fearless Insurgent, with the attempt to blackmail the latter into withdrawal through connecting his name with a scandal in which a woman is the veiled figure, and with the sudden discovery by the crooked politician that the woman in the case is his own erring daughter. "The Return of Peter Grimm" details the manner in which Grimm, after death, comes back in spirit to set at rights the troubled affairs of his household.

Mr. Brady's leading concern will be for the evolution of the permanent stock company that is to be settled in the Playhouse. This aggregation is to be headed by that pleasant artiste, Miss Grace George, and according to my sooth-sayers will have as its leading man a handsome dog of a Briton named Allen Ainsworth. "The Earth," an English newspaper drama that was miscast and

failed when presented by another manager in America a year or so ago, will probably be revealed anew by the stock company. It is Mr. Brady's intention to make of the chief feminine character in this exhibit a good woman gone wrong instead of a wicked lady with a studied and deliberate fancy for foot slippings, as the role was originally interpreted. Bulwer Lytton's "Money," commanded in honor of the Kaiser two months ago in the English capital, will be revived, as will also an early British comedy or two. Douglas Fairbanks will appear in a play by Stackpole and Wodehouse called "A Gentleman of Leisure." The gentleman in question is a fearless young devil, and the particular leisure in question is employed by him in breaking into a house for purposes of plunder as the result of a café wager. The house turns out to be that of the captain of police, about whose daughter our gentleman friend is just nutty. Robert Mantell will appear in Justin Huntley McCarthy's "Love the Conqueror," to be renamed "Charlemagne," and in "The O'Flynn," by the same writer.

Henry B. Harris will present Robert Edeson, whom brother villain Mencken calls "the idol of Baltimore," in a dramatization of a SMART SET novelette, "Lady Méchante," the work of Gelett Burgess. In play form, the title will be altered to "The Cave Man." My readers will recall that the narrative deals entertainingly with the introduction into society of a coalheaver, a black diamond in the rough. Miss Helen Ware will appear in a play by George Broadhurst called "The Price," the leading role in which is that of a young Italian woman born in America. Although Escupius has been unable to ferret out the plot mystery in this case, he infers that the "price" of the title has to do with a woman's sacrifice of her honor for something or other—very probably other. George Bronson Howard's promising satire, "Snobs," will be presented with Frank McIntyre in the role of a milk wagon driver who suddenly finds that he has succeeded to the title of Duke of Walshire, and who, to obtain the "cul-choor" necessary to the situation, en-

lists the aid of his friend the furnace tender. The latter knows all about dukes, as he has read numerous "society" novels and seen several "society" plays, and agrees to assist his comrade in fitting himself for his newly acquired career.

Edgar Selwyn's new product is called "The Arab," although the title may be changed to "The Dragoman." The play, which is of the "Strongheart" blend, tells the white and tan tale of a son of the desert who falls in love with an American mission worker, who changes his religion for the fourth time in order to please the lady in the case, who is subsequently accused of treachery and who turns the Sahara country upside down in his battle for the golden girl. Miss Elsie Ferguson is announced to appear in a purely native comedy by Charles Nirdlinger entitled "Dolly Madison," the story of which has to do with the melodramatic though silent love of Aaron Burr for the then first lady of the land, with the dreams and trusts and adventures of the people of the capital in the day when the flag was young, and with the early battledore and shuttlecock of diplomacy and the secret service. "The Professor's Wife," by Mrs. Fremont Older and Elmer Harris, bearing the alternate title of "Fillette," concerns the neglected young spouse of a professional scholar who seeks to alleviate her lonesomeness through the dangerous medium of a young man with hair on his head. *Boudoir—twelve o'clock—"I love you"—weak struggle—enter husband—tableau!* Miss Rose Stahl's new play, from the laboratory of Charles Klein, is called "Maggie Pepper," and relates the hazards in the life of a lady buyer for a large department store.

The ill fated New Theater, rechristened the Century, will blossom forth under the well schooled management of the Lieblers, the first fresh production being a dramatization of Hichens's passionate color riot, "The Garden of Allah." Sandstorms, hot love making and similar eruptions of nature, as my readers know, are among the chief ingredients of this work. Mme. Simone will

make her first appearance in America under the Liebler wing. She will play in English and will present herself in her original role in "The Thief," as well as in a new drama by Bernstein, whom she "discovered," and in a Parker adaptation of Rostand's "Princess Lointaine," to be known as "The Lady of Dreams." George Arliss will disclose himself in Louis Parker's dramatic story of the English statesman Disraeli.

Miss Margaret Anglin will appear in an English comedy, "Green Stockings," and maybe in Zangwill's most recent play, "The Next Religion." The former presentation will narrate the story of an old maid who, to convince her friends that she is not beyond the love age limit, writes letters to herself from an imaginary individual in some foreign land. One day the presumably visionary chap pokes his very real head in at the door. And if you cannot guess the rest, you are truly more to be pitied than censured. Miss Gertrude Elliott will show in Joseph Medill Patterson's "Rebellion," which recounts the revolt of a young wife wedded to a drunken degenerate. The wife, bound to him by the church as long as he lives, cannot divorce him and marry the man whom she has come to love. In the end, however, she solves her difficulties by renouncing the house of her faith. Among the other new plays to be projected by this firm are a dramatization of David Graham Phillips's "White Magic," the masterly story of the usual girl nuisance who goes after one of us and determines to get him for herself whether he wills it or not; "The Affair at the Barracks," C. M. S. McLellan's adaptation of the Continental success, "Barrakenlust"; Hugh Ford's completion of O. Henry's posthumous play, "The World and the Door," and a drama founded on "The Beast and the Jungle," by Harriet Ford and Judge Ben Lindsay.

Wagenhals and Kemper will endeavor to duplicate the success of "Seven Days" with "What the Doctor Ordered," by A. E. Thomas. The play is described as being "a homeopathic treatment for domestic ills, of which

hair and eyebrows are the first symptoms." The playwright has taken as his valuable theme the second or third year after a love marriage—the birth of that dread period when once divine wifery begins to seem to look less and less at the breakfast table like Marie Doro and once godlike hubby more and more like a clothing salesman from Terra Haute; that preordained inevitable day when wifery begins to think of that perfectly grand dancer she met four summers ago at Bar Harbor and hubby begins to see again in the curling cigar smoke the visions of dear departed chorus girls; that ghastly gray moment when both drink their coffee in grim, sad silence and begin to wonder if—

What the sensible doctor orders is a vacation each from the other.

In George M. Cohan's head there is buzzing a dramatization of Chester's merry tale, "Ballyhoo Bill," the story of a sideshow barker with a soft heart. The Cohan firm also has on the carpet two new farces by James Montgomery, author of "The Aviator," that, after the manner of Harry Bulger's song, "flew so high it hit the sky and never came back till the Fourth of July." The farces are called respectively "Ready Money" and "Jimmy, Jr." Mr. Montgomery is also collaborating with William Collier on the latter's next play, "Take My Advice." "Ready Money"—not a bad title, is it?—has to do with the influence of the fat bankroll on the public's pulse. A man with a gold mine or something equally unprofitable on his hands finds himself dead broke. "If I only had a wad of money to flash around, even if it wasn't mine, I could gather in the suckers and make a fortune," he tells a friend. The friend lends him his own roll temporarily. He displays the wad promiscuously, and one by one the otherwise wily trout snap at the bait and buy stock in the "rich" mine. "Jimmy, Jr." appears rather straight comedy than farce. Its theme is the snuffing out of a big man with ridicule as the instrument. Jimmy is the son of a crooked and relatively powerful politician. The latter is persistent in his dishonesty until he discovers that his son, following his

example, has also become a knave. The father, to save Jimmy, Jr., renounces his tricky practices and turns straight. J. E. Dodson will lay aside "The House Next Door" and will take up a play by the same author. It is to be called "Gauntlett's Pride," and deals with the destructiveness of an all-encompassing vanity.

The Frohman plans, like William Jennings Bryan's platforms and Lillian Russell's husbands, are subject to change without notice. Placing confidence in the reports of my faithful servants, however, I may make bold to set down some of the possibly more certain ones. Although the ultimate disposition of this manager's leading players is still problematical, it may be ventured that Miss Billie Burke will appear in a new comedy by Thompson Buchanan styled "Natalie"; that Miss Hattie Williams will be presented in a fresh comedy by Porter Emerson Browne; and that William H. Crane will lay aside George Ade's "United States Minister Bedloe," of which I spoke feelingly several months ago, in favor of a dramatization of the familiar Joseph C. Lincoln "down East" yarns. "Natalie" is the tale of a willful young lady who sets her cap for a fellow, gets him to marry her out of a sort of pity and is then subjected to the pleasure of being assured directly after the wedding ceremony that he does not love her one wee little bit.

Among the foreign plays scheduled for production are the St. James Theater success, "The Witness for the Defense," "Passers-by," "The Butterfly on the Wheel," "The Popinjay," "Lady Patricia," and a new and as yet unfinished comedy by J. M. Barrie.

The idea of "The Witness for the Defense" may be summed up in this fashion: Courtroom—divorce proceedings—brute of husband accuses wife—wife takes stand in own defense—barrister drags full confession from her lips! In "Passers-by," the simplicity of a man made a child again brings together a man and woman whose hearts are crying for reunion. "The Popinjay" tells of a wife who bears her long suffering through a sense of pride, and "Lady

Patricia," a satirical comedy, points out in a general way your faults and my virtues. "The Butterfly on the Wheel," by Hemmerde and Neilson, narrates the story of Peggy Admaston, one of the innumerable, dunderheaded young wives who believes a husband should be a day-long handholder instead of a larder scout, and who makes up her mind she is a poor, neglected creature when husband persists in staying downtown after two o'clock in the afternoon. Result: Roderick Collingwood, between innings. Further result: Divorce court. Peggy, like Stella Ballantyne in "The Witness for the Defense," takes the stand. The circumstantial evidence is all against her. Husband discovers that Collingwood and a female accomplice have fixed up a plot to place Peggy in a bad light so that a divorce may bloom, Peggy may wither and the female accomplice may step in and take her place in the Admaston *ménage*. Final consequent result: Reconciliation. Two French plays secured by Mr. Frohman are "The Million," by Berr and Guillemand, which is also claimed by Henry W. Savage, and "La Gamine," by Veber and DeGorsse. "The Million" concerns a young artist who has won a prize of one million francs in the national lottery. He places the ticket in an old coat, and his sweetheart sweetly presents the coat to a street beggar. Forthwith follows the Sardouesque chase after "the scrap of paper." What "La Gamine" is about—God knows! My crystal gazers, Rego and even the valuable Herman have failed me.

Miss Marie Tempest, under Shubert management, may appear in "Lily the Bill Topper," a dramatization of André Castaigne's novel, that divulges the narrative of Lily Clifton, a trick cyclist who has been trained by a brutal male parent to be a daring performer. Lily marries an awful souse who spansks her, becomes involved in several compromising situations and otherwise enjoys herself. She manages to preserve a whole skin, however, and is finally rewarded by a benign Providence for her Gibraltarian virtue. A melodrama in many scenes called "An Enemy to Society,"

the work of George Bronson Howard and Wilson Mizner, is scheduled by Klaw and Erlanger, as is also an "all star" revival of "Ben Hur" and a spectacular production of Edward Knoblauch's new Oriental drama, "Kismet." The Howard-Mizner play will be a double-barreled spine tickler throwing on the screen the kidnapping of a rich man's young son and the bringing up of the child by a band of crooks. The boy's mind is made bitter against the oppressive rich by his foster parents of the underworld, and he is developed into a crusader against the gold power.

According to present plans, Thomas Wise and John Barrymore are to be shown as coworkers in a new Anne Caldwell-James O'Dea comedy known as "Uncle Sam," although at the stroke of twelve young Mr. Barrymore may be permitted to brave the cold world alone in a Caldwell piece called "The Life of the Party." The first named play is a sort of "Gentleman from Mississippi" and "Old Heidelberg" combined, and unfolds the anecdote of a young American at the German university who falls in love with a Viennese actress lady and whose guardian uncle seeks to blow out that flame in order that he may strike a match for his nephew with a girl from home. Among the new productions announced by A. H. Woods are "The Littlest Rebel," a Civil War play by Edward Peple, in which the Farnum brothers will be starred; "The Greyhound," a transatlantic card sharp melodrama by Armstrong and Mizner; and three imported farces, "The Marriage Broker," "Tantalizing Tommy" and "The Antelope." The first of these concerns an agency that insures husbands against flirting and indiscreet wives; the second deals with the Shavian idea of the pursuit of man by woman; and the third is an aeroplane entertainment after the style of "The Aviator."

Even yet there is no surcease from plans. Thick and quick they come, treading on one another's heels like so many wretched clerks at the grand annual ball of the Bon Ton Social Club. H. S. Sheldon, who aroused attention with his initial effort, "The Havoc,"

will be represented by a satirical play to be called "The Fool's Creed"; Avery Hopwood will reveal himself anew under the Savage direction with a farce to be styled "Somewhere Else"; Daniel Frohman will sevensister a new play by Elmer Harris called "Thy Neighbor's Wife"; and Margaret Mayo will woo the critics either with "Behind the Scenes," a play of theatrical life that had a try-out last season, or with "The Flirt," the story of which revolves about a young girl who breaks all the Commandments and is proud of it. Henrietta Crosman is announced to appear in "The Peacock and the Goose," by Catherine C. Cushing, an exhibit that follows in the channel marked out by A. E. Thomas's "Her Husband's Wife" and that details the effect registered on a dowdy wife by a spruced-up, man winning intruder. Tim Murphy will venture forth in "The New Code," a comedy by an Ohio newspaper reporter that treats of the dethronement of the skirted ruler of the household by her long suffering husband. "The Whip," the well known English spectacular melodrama, may be brought to this shore by F. C. Whitney, in which event American audiences will be treated again to another of the typical old-fashioned thrillers exuberant with such delicate sentiments as "Aha, Rudolph! At last I have you by the seat of the trousers!" Somerset Maugham's "Loaves and Fishes" is another possibility. As you probably know from having read "The Bishop's Apron," from which the play has been deduced, the comedy has to do with a clergyman who spells God with an *l* before the *d*. A second possibility is a new Jerome K. Jerome play called "The Master of Chilvers," dealing with that greatest of all boresome topics—woman suffrage. Any playwright who can succeed in making this subject interesting will be awarded a beautiful set of mauve galluses by this department. Good luck to you, good Sir Jerome!

Before night descends upon us, let us hasten to snatch a fleeting glimpse at the musical plays that are marching against the city. Donald Brian will

waltz in "The Siren," by the authors of "The Dollar Princess"; Marguerite Sylva will disclose herself in the much talked-of Lehar light opera, "Gipsy Love"; and "The Quaker Girl," that has given birth every evening to a line of English stage door Johnnies two miles long, will be brought over by Frank McKee. Fritz Scheff, unless seized with an attack of temperament in the meantime, will sing in "Rosita"; Klaw and Erlanger will give us the Continental success, "The Count of Luxembourg"; Raymond Hitchcock will bow in the new Pollock-Wolf tune play, "The Red Widow"; George Marion will be presented in "The Jolly Peasant," by the authors of "The Merry Widow"; Joseph Weber will seek to rehabilitate the old music hall with a "girl show" called "Señorita"; and Lew Fields has in his desk something bearing the tentative title, "The Singing Teacher." Eddie Foy will do his best in a musical version of "The Man from Mexico"; Julian Eltinge will appear in "The Fascinating Widow"; and Charles Frohman will present a new musical comedy called "The Doll Girl" with a newly created "star."

What I have attempted here is merely an easy hammock view of the dawning theatrical season. If I have omitted a few statistics of possibly vital dramatic importance, it is my fault—not yours. So do not become unduly excited. I am not a bookkeeper. If I have made no mention of Molnar's "Playing with Fire," in which a husband in masquerade seeks to find out the state of his wife's virtue, probably it may be because I am a bit modest. Who can tell? And if I have neglected to chronicle the formal and serious announcements that Dusé is to appear in America, that William Gillette is to produce a new war play and that Eugene Walter's "Assassin" is to see the light at last, it may be that Maharama, Escupius, Rego, Herman and I hail in a body from that particular section of the United States that is bounded on the west by Kansas, Nebraska and the Indian Territory, on the north by Iowa, on the south by Arkansas and on the east by the mighty Mississippi!

THE NEW DRAMATIC LITERATURE

By H. L. Mencken

UPON the depressing stupidity and vulgarity of New York first nighters my colleague, Mr. Nathan, has lately discoursed with great eloquence. As for me, I am no New Yorker, save intermittently and unwillingly, and so I do not have to sit beside such animals very often; but they have thousands of relatives, of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth nights, in the provinces, and the fair city I inhabit has its full share of them. They may be distinguished from truly civilized theatergoers by various signs. In the first place, their women always smell of unearthly coal tar perfumery; in the second place, they themselves always wear dinner coats; in the third place, they break into explosive laughter whenever the word "damn" is uttered on the stage; in the fourth place, they make a peculiar, indescribable, throaty sound whenever the proceedings become what they call "suggestive"; in the fifth place, they always speak of a play as a "show," and in the sixth and last place, they distinguish but two classes of "shows," to wit, good "shows" and rotten "shows." In the former class—I speak especially of the provincial species—they put all plays with rubber stamp plots, all plays of bullring buffoonery and all plays of frank obscenity; and into the latter class they put all plays of ideas.

Because of the presence of these simple folk, playgoing in our fair land is often a trying adventure. Not only do they make it necessary for our managers to give us far more bad "shows" than good ones, but they also have a habit of spoiling the "show" whenever it happens, by any chance, to be good. In

the presence of such a drama as Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler," Shaw's "Man and Superman" or Walter's "The Easiest Way" their one thought seems to be to smell out indecencies. Compared to their covert snickering, their incessant shuffling, their asinine whispering, the frank booing of the English gallery god is soothing as a sound and intelligent as a criticism. The less boorish theatergoer, trying to get himself into the mood for receiving and enjoying a work of art, is constantly annoyed and exasperated by the proximity of these killjoys. The actors on the stage, following the custom of their trade, always do their best to make the play absurd; the overdressed hinds in the auditorium complete the crime. To see Hervieu's "Connais Toi" as I have seen it in Baltimore, with bad actors obfuscating it and a fat *entrepreneur* beside me sighing, "Oh, hell!" at intervals of three minutes, is not unlike hearing the funeral march of the Eroica Symphony done by honest union men at the "lodge of sorrow" of some barroom fraternal order.

Fortunately there is no need for the partisan of the drama to submit himself to such assaults from stage and stalls. When the theater itself becomes unbearable he may flee to his own home, and there, in peace and quiet, read the plays which the vileness of man makes it painful, if not downright impossible, for him to see. Time was when Shakespeare was the only dramatist read by Americans—if, indeed, even *he* was read—but that time is happily no more. We have been taught, by enforced familiarity with the printed pages of Ibsen and Shaw, to visualize costumes and scenery, false whiskers and talcumed noses, in the

library. We have learned a new trick and we joy to perform it. Not so many years ago the printing of a contemporary play of any value was a rare occurrence. Today they pour from the presses in a steady stream—English plays, translated Continental plays, even a few American plays—and the fact that they do so is proof that there is a public waiting for them. I have, in a collection by no means exhaustive, more than four hundred modern plays, and fully two hundred of them, I believe, are good plays. Of good plays the theaters of my town, taken together, offer about ten a year. It would thus take me twenty years to see two hundred there. But stretched at ease in the old homestead, a pillow under my head, I may read two hundred on two hundred nights, and then begin all over again and enjoy a hundred and sixty-five a second time before the year runs out.

Here, for example, is Gerhart Hauptmann's very impressive drama, "THE WEAVERS" (*Huebsch*), done into English by Mary Morison. So far as I know, "THE WEAVERS" has never been played in English in our theaters. Hauptmann's "Hannele" has been seen (the first time it was produced in New York the moral ferrets of that town demanded that it be prohibited by the police), and his "The Sunken Bell" was once presented by Sothorn and Marlowe; but "THE WEAVERS," undoubtedly the greatest of all his works and one of the most striking and influential of modern German plays, remains a stranger to our stage. For a dollar, however, one may now have it in a pretty little book, to read and study at one's leisure, and without having to hear bad actors mouth its lines or to sit among donkeys who find it incomprehensible. Mr. Huebsch's edition is a reprint of the London edition of William Heinemann. Let us hope that he will also reprint the other plays in the series—"Hannele," "The Sunken Bell," and "Lonely Lives."

Better still, here comes an American edition of the plays of John Millington Synge, beautifully printed and bound and extremely modest in price. Synge, like Hauptmann, is practically unknown

to our theatergoers, and yet he wrote, during his short life, at least two dramas of the first rank; and they were written, not in German or French or Norwegian, but in honest English. Reading his "RIDERS TO THE SEA" and "THE TINKER'S WEDDING" (*Luce*), you will make acquaintance with the one undoubted genius of the Neo-Celtic movement—not a fantastic, pale green mystic like W. B. Yeats, or a maker of crude folk plays like Douglas Hyde, but a noble poet plus a great dramatic craftsman, a man who got the universal note into scenes from the lives of simple Irish peasants, an Irishman who wrote an Irish tragedy so poignant that it lifted his people to a Grecian dignity, and a comedy so searching and merciless that it made his people scream. That tragedy is "RIDERS TO THE SEA," a mere fragment, a thing of twenty-eight pages, and yet, if I do not err, a work of art of the very highest quality. I have never seen it on the stage, and if ever it is given in my vicinity I shall apply to be jailed during the performance, for it is impossible to imagine such marvelous prose coming from the mouths of actors, those sworn foes of all beauty. It is prose that enchants the ear with queer rhythms and exquisite cadences—prose that, for variety and movement, freedom and color, has been unapproached in our time. Synge once said that he had learned to write it by listening to West Coast Irishmen through a crack in the floor of his inn chamber. I don't believe it. As well imagine Marlowe getting Faustus's great speech before Helen from the horseboys of the Bankside!

Synge wrote, in all, but six plays—the two mentioned, "The Playboy of the Western World" (a masterpiece of comedy), "The Shadow of the Glen," "The Well of the Saints" and "Deirdre of the Sorrows," which last I have yet to read. In addition he wrote two books of travel, "The Aran Islands" and "In Kerry and Wicklow"—notebooks, as it were, for his plays. Strangely enough, the incomparable Synge prose, which appears in such magnificent flower in the speeches of his stage characters, is almost missing from his accounts of his own wander-

ings. Here and there one encounters a glowing page of it, but for the most part his descriptions are commonplace and sometimes even clumsy. Synge died in Dublin on April 1, 1909, at the early age of thirty-eight. He had been writing less than five years. What he would have come to had he lived fifteen years longer no man can tell. But once you have read his plays you will agree, I think, that his was one of the most original and arresting talents of our day and generation.

Another Irishman of parts—George Bernard Shaw, no other—comes before us with a new book of some four hundred pages, containing three plays and three long prefaces. In the case of "GETTING MARRIED" and "THE SHOWING-UP OF BLANCO POSNET" the prefaces are far more important than the plays. "GETTING MARRIED" shows, in spots, a plentiful cleverness, but elsewhere it shows mere smartness—and smartness, once its quality is reinforced by quantity, begins to grow tedious, like the kisses following the first dozen. As for "BLANCO POSNET," it is a somewhat cheap effort to shock the pious, in the course of which Mr. Shaw reveals the abysmality of his ignorance of spoken American. Where he got the dialect of his unearthly Westerners I don't know, but I venture to suspect some German version of the Italian libretto of "The Girl of the Golden West." There remains "THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA," an amusing and well constructed piece, in which fun is poked at the medical fellows on the one hand, and that puzzling thing, the artistic temperament, is studied on the other. Shaw's hero is a great artist who is also a shameless scoundrel. To serve his art he preys upon all available game—his wife, his friends, mere strangers. At the very gates of success he falls ill, and eminent physicians are called in to wrestle with the bacilli which infest him. One of these physicians, the only one who can cure him, falls in love with his wife. What to do? Kill the scoundrel and get the wife, or save the artist and lose the wife? You may rest assured that Shaw neglects none of the opportunities that this amazing problem offers. The play,

indeed, is the best he has done since "Man and Superman."

But in the preface, in which he undertakes to dispose of medical experimentation, the brilliance of his rhetoric does not conceal the weakness of his cause. Not that he employs the old, old arguments, depends upon the old, old false testimony, wrings the old, old tears. Far from it, indeed. With characteristic originality he seeks ammunition in the very latest discoveries of the pathologists—particularly in Sir Almroth Wright's discovery of opsonins and of the so-called negative phase in the process of immunization. But after reading fifty pages of his engaging paralogy, one suddenly finds at the end that it is mere nonsense, after all—that Shaw, like every other anti-vivisectionist, is merely a sentimentalist who strains at a guinea pig and swallows a baby. In brief, the wild Irishman sinks to the level of a somewhat ridiculous crusader. The trouble with him is that he has begun to take himself seriously. When he was content to write plays first and discuss them afterward, he was unfailingly diverting. But now that he writes tracts first and then devises plays to rub them in he grows rather tedious.

Of the other plays before me the best are the twenty-one one-acters which Maurice Baring calls "DIMINUTIVE DRAMAS" (*Houghton-Mifflin*). Here we have an amusing dialogue between Henry VIII and Catherine Parr, another between Socrates and Xantippe, a delicate burlesque upon Maeterlinck's "The Blue Bird," a rehearsal scene at the Globe Theater in 1595, a grotesque version of the story of King Alfred and the oat cakes—and many another fine piece of wit and humor, exquisitely wrought. Few of these little plays are for acting. They were fashioned for reading—and for reading they are delicious. Upon "THE WOMAN AND THE FIDDLER," by some mysterious Norwegian who hides behind the pen name of Arne Norrevang (*Brown*), I can heap no such praises. As a matter of fact, the aim and purport of this fantastic piece are beyond me. I can only say that it deals with Norwegian folklore,

that it suggests the more extravagant scenes of "Peer Gynt" and that it is happily impossible of performance on the stage. "RUST," by Algernon Tassin (*Broadway Pub. Co.*), is a dramatic sermon against the overcoddling of women. Mr. Tassin yet shows an amateurish prolixity, but his dialogue often has vivacity and plausibility, and no doubt he will one day write a better play. Finally comes "A LESSON IN MARRIAGE" (*Brandu*), a somewhat inept English version of Björnstjerne Björnson's "De Nygifte" (*The Newly Married*), an old-fashioned two-acter first published so long ago as 1865, and in which one encounters the sound doctrine that it is dangerous for a young couple, lately spliced, to live with the bride's parents. To Björnson such homely matters were always of interest. Even before Ibsen he felt the dramatic pull of the commonplace.

Not only new plays, but also new books of stage history and dramatic criticism grow plentiful. Here, for example, are volumes of reminiscence by Daniel Frohman and Seymour Hicks, the one an American manager who stands in the front rank of his profession, and the other an English comedian and librettist. Mr. Frohman's book is called "MEMOIRS OF A MANAGER" (*Doubleday-Page*), and in it he tells the story of the Lyceum Theater Company, the last of the great American stock companies. His anecdotes I leave for your enjoyment without preparation; of his serious chronicle it is sufficient to say that it shows him to have been, so far back as the eighties, an eager experimenter in the new drama that was then struggling so desperately against the old drama of balderdash. Mr. Frohman, in twenty years, saw such puerile things as "Hazel Kirk" and "Esmeralda" give way to the excellent comedies of Pinero and Jones, the middling comedies of Carton and Jerome and the passable comedies of Marshall and Fitch, and if he helped that progress in no other way he at least dared its box office risks and hazards. The Hicks book is "TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OF AN ACTOR'S LIFE" (*Lane*), a light-hearted account of light-hearted

adventures in the lesser drama which hangs upon the edges of vaudeville. Mr. Hicks is not a great artist—perhaps, indeed, he is not an artist at all—but it may be justly said for him that his nimble cavortings have helped the good folk of London to digest many a ton of suet pudding and many a lowing herd of kine.

Finally come the dramatic critics—two of them, and both very entertaining and instructive fellows. In his "MASKS AND MINSTRELS OF NEW GERMANY" (*Luce*), Percival Pollard deals with the so-called *Ueberbrett!* movement of a decade ago, a brave effort to rescue vaudeville from pothouse wit and tinpan music. Imagine Robert Loveman and Percy Mackaye writing comic ballads for Eva Tanguay and Nat Wills, and such musicians as Horatio Parker and Dr. Chadwick doing the music! Well, that is exactly what a group of hopeful young poets and composers attempted in Germany—Detlov von Liliencron, Otto Erich Hartleben and Otto Julius Bierbaum among the former, and Paul Lincke, Oscar Straus and Viktor Hollaender among the latter. A twofold aim inflamed these ardent youngsters. In the first place, they would make the varieties fit for civilized human beings, and in the second place they would revive the minstrelsy of the Golden Age—that most-low-flying, as the Germans might say, of all the arts—that art *par excellence* of the people. Naturally enough, the scheme failed. The German vaudeville audience, like the American vaudeville audience, feared and fears all true beauty. Its thirst is ever for the banal, the vulgar, the gross, the silly, the squalid. So it snickered idiotically and the *Ueberbrett!* movement went to pot.

But out of the wreck something came, after all—and that something was a new school of German writers. Frank Wedekind, falling under the influence of Hartleben and the rest, wrote "Früling's Erwachen," that most daring of latter day German plays; Hartleben himself, beginning as a minor poet, ended by revolutionizing the German short story; Bierbaum, graduating from the little Trianon Theater under the railway arch

in Berlin, became a master of half a dozen forms—a poet recalling the minstrels of an elder day, a novelist of insight and humor, a writer of delightful sketches of travel, a hospitable and courageous critic. And by the efforts of these men and their followers a change came over the whole face of German letters. Formalism fell into decay; in every direction experiment took the place of imitation; there was a wholesale shaking-up of old bones, a massacre of ancient gods; for the first time since Goethe's death the clear note of truth was sounded. To date Bierbaum's "Irrgarten der Liebe" has had a sale of 45,000 copies. Truly an extraordinary book of verse! Truly an extraordinary man! Truly an extraordinary movement! And in this little volume of his, Mr. Pollard chats of the books and men of that movement with unflinching understanding and sympathy. He is no solemn pundit, no ponderous reciter of critical formulæ. Going behind the printed page he shows us the man—and often the man, as in Hartleben's case, is even more interesting than his creations. And the thing is done in that free and easy, confidential, ever surprising Pollard style which seems so easy to imitate—and is yet so abominably difficult.

C. E. Montague is the other critic. He serves the Manchester *Guardian*, an esteemed public gazette of the English hinterland; and for two or three years past his weekly articles, aided by discriminating editorial shears, have been making their way in the world. Now a few score of them have been recast into sixteen chapters and published as "DRAMATIC VALUES" (*Macmillan*), a slim green book. Here we have a man who has given hard thought to the theater and its problems and has arrived at a number of original and intelligible ideas. His chapter on Shaw, for example, is the most sensible discussion of that wild Irishman that I have ever seen—an estimate which hits the bull's-eye exactly in the center—a little masterpiece of friendly but straightforward criticism. And his chapters upon Ibsen, Synge, Masefield, Wilde and other dramatists

are almost as good. Altogether this Mr. Montague is a critic whose work rises far above the customary newspaper drivel—a student of the current drama whose very first book makes him a respectable competitor of Walkley and Archer. Like Pollard, he is far from solemn, but like Pollard again he has something to say.

"THE LONG ROLL," by Mary Johnstone (*Houghton-Mifflin*), the first of two prose epics of the Civil War, must be set down a glorious failure. Miss Johnstone, as every habitual user of American fiction is well aware, is an accomplished craftswoman. The little tricks and devices of her art are at her fingers' end; she writes gracefully and well; she is never guilty of the cheapness of the best seller manufacturers. And in the present case a genuine enthusiasm fortifies her; one feels that the drama of the great conflict has long stirred her blood, that she has long breathed its drifting smoke, that its heroes have been her heroes. But something more than facility and enthusiasm is needed to manage so stupendous a chronicle as that she has sought to write. Her volume covers the whole course of the war, from the early recruiting in the Valley of Virginia to the death of Stonewall Jackson. Now and then there is a vivid flashlight portrait of Jackson—urging his tired men along frozen roads, praying on the night before a battle, paralyzing subordinates with his sudden wraths, wounded and dying in the Wilderness. But a rounded, living, breathing figure does not emerge. The narrative is too much overlaid with detail, too smoky, too chaotic. The impression one gets from it is that of a vast welter of men and horses, struggling aimlessly, rolling over one another, suffering abominably and to no purpose. I have no doubt that this is an accurate picture of the war. No man who was in it has ever been able to reduce it to a well ordered tragedy, with acts and scenes, plausible characters and logical climaxes. Stonewall himself remains a maze of contradictions. Who knows what sort of human being he really was? Who has ever explained him, accounted for him? Certainly not Miss Johnstone. She has left him fabu-

lous, preposterous, inexplicable. And here we come upon her artistic sin in "THE LONG ROLL," which is not the sin of failing to accomplish the impossible, but the sin of attempting the impossible. What the book lacks is artistic selection; it is not a novel at all, but the crude material of a novel—the copious and confusing notes and sketches out of which a novel might have been made. In "Lewis Rand" artistic selection was visible on every page; the clear metal of the story ran cleanly from its mountain of ore. But in this later novel there is only, or at least chiefly, the ore.

When Thrysis, the absurdly named hero of Upton Sinclair's new novel, "LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE" (*Kennerley*), takes the manuscript of his masterpiece to Prof. Osborne, who once tried to teach him English, the Professor says, gently: "The thing is sincere, perhaps even exalted, but it's overstrained and exaggerated." I wonder if Mr. Sinclair put that speech into poor old Osborne's mouth as a sort of hint to reviewers—a hint and a challenge? It actually describes "Love's Pilgrimage" with great accuracy—and it gives the last touch of audacity to a book already notable for the frankness of its palpably autobiographical passages and its bloody realism elsewhere. Mr. Sinclair, as usual, writes with a great show of profundity. Like all other Socialists he is a painfully serious man; the only humor he permits himself is that grisly brand affected by medical students. But here, as in no other work of his that I know, his pose is justified by his achievement, for he has written an extraordinarily acute and interesting study of the conflict between the artistic impulse and the commonplace responsibilities of life—between the artist and the man of family. Poor Thrysis, afire with literary ambition, commits the blunder of getting him a wife, and thereafter, for rather more than six hundred pages, the influence of that wife and of the ensuing infant upon his dreams and doings is set forth with appalling particularity. If it be urged against Mr. Sinclair by those of squeamish stomach that he dwells with damnable iteration upon the physical facts of

life, it may be answered for him that the physical facts of life are the very ones most apt to impress and obsess a fellow so unworldly as his hero. The poets who sing of love make no mention of anesthetics, colic, teething, soothing syrups and other such inevitable *sequelæ*. These things, coming to the hymeneal neophyte as surprises, must be surprises of a far from agreeable variety. Mr. Sinclair, in "LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE," deals with them frankly. I have no room here to consider such frankness in the abstract or in the light of our tawdry national prudery. All I can say is that I myself am a violent believer in it, and that the present example of it has vastly increased my respect for an author I have often belabored for the good of his soul.

What could make better reading for the good old summer time than a brisk tale of love and daring? And where will you find a better such tale than "THE SOVEREIGN POWER," by Mark Lee Luther? (*Macmillan*.) Mr. Luther is not only up to the minute, but even a bit ahead of the minute for his hero, young Oliver Page, late of the Engineer Corps, U. S. A., amazes Italy with an airship which goes so fast that it makes those of M.M. Latham, Bleriot, Paulhan et Cie. look like lumbering tramp steamers. But navigating the air is one thing and winning Ann Milburn is quite another thing, for on the latter job there is a rival more dangerous than all the Lathams and Bleriot, to wit, the Prince Michel-Alexandre-Constantin-Stephen-Paul de Rodoslav-Nemanya, Duc de Kronsbourg, Comte de Felsheim, grandee of Spain, relative of the Hapsburgs, the Bourbons, the Hohenzollerns, the Wittelsbachs and the Guelfs, and pretender to the throne of Servia. The Prince, at the start, is not actually in love with Ann, but he wants the world, and particularly the crafty Baron Saccarello, watchdog of Europe, to think that he is; for, once that notion prevails, it will be assumed as a corollary that he is too busy to play tricks in the Balkans, and so he will be able to play those tricks all the better. Unluckily, the poor Prince is elevated by his own mine. That is to

say, he falls in love with Ann in dead earnest, and poor Ann, who has been getting a lot of fun out of the pretense, now flies from the reality. As for the Prince, he goes up into the air—not figuratively, but literally. That is to say, he departs for Servia, glory and forgetfulness in his new aeroplane. What happens to him I am not going to tell you, for I have already told you enough of Mr. Luther's galloping and diverting story. It is a story which differs much from the common run of light fiction, for it is written gracefully and persuasively and with considerable painstaking. The one fault I have to find with it is that the Prince is far more interesting than young Oliver Page—and the Baron Saccarello more interesting than either. We must have the Baron again, in some other tale. He is too engaging an old devil to part with so soon.

Diaries of neglected wives have engaged a number of authors of late—I have read fully half a dozen during the past two years. The latest is "WHEN HALF-GODS GO," by Helen R. Martin (*Century Co.*). Here we learn how Robert and Edith Newbold drift apart, Robert being ensnared by Dorothea Worthington, an artful conversationalist. Now enters Eliot Newbold who seeks to save his brother by making love to Dorothea. The plan works admirably, but when Robert suddenly dies, it is not Dorothea, but the widowed Edith that Eliot leads to the altar. The scene is a small town in Pennsylvania. Another such town gives a setting to "ESTHER DEMON," by Mrs. Fremont Older (*Scribner*), in which the heroine, stepping aside from virtue, is driven from home by her anthropophagous Methodist father. Later on she and the town drunkard save each other. A story full of merits in detail. In "PHYRNETTE," by Marthe Trolly-Curtin (*Lippincott*) and "AN ARDENT AMERICAN," by Mrs. Russell Codman (*Century Co.*) the same idea appears, and in both books it is worked out with humor and ingenuity. In the first named, the fair Mlle. Phrynnette Chédor, daughter of a French father and a Scotch mother, goes to London at eighteen to visit her late mamma's rela-

tives, the MacGuinnesses, and there she has a merry time exploring the British metropolis and the British mind, and incidentally she sights, tracks and captures a British husband. In "AN ARDENT AMERICAN," the fair Yvonne Carrington, American in blood but German by birth and breeding, makes her first visit to the United States at eighteen—and, like Mlle. Phrynnette, proceeds by a devious and hilarious way to the sacrificial altar. Make your choice between the two books. Either one of them will keep you awake and contented on a gummy afternoon.

The title of "CONRAD IN QUEST OF HIS YOUTH," by Leonard Merrick (*Kennerley*), neatly reduces an excellent story to six words. Conrad Warrenner, suddenly made opulent at thirty-seven by the lamentable death of his Aunt Tryphena, comes back from the colonies, where he has been exiled for fifteen years, to London town, and proceeds to look up the loves of his nonage. Alas, what cruel things old Father Time will do! Little Mary Page, that angel of the long ago, is now the hulking and hideous Mrs. Barchester-Bailey, with a baroque drawing room and four smeary little Barchester-Baileys in Hyperion Terrace, Upper Tooting. And Mrs. Adaile, sweet memory of the lonely years—what of her? "She had altered certainly—even pathetically. . . . A shade too stout. Yes, a shade too stout for his taste. And—*and had her hair been copper color in Rouen?*"

Nothing new in this sad story, of course. Most of us have read it before. Many of us have lived it. But Mr. Merrick tells it so capitally, with so many graces, with so much delicacy and wit and charm, that you will follow it to the end without thought of its antiquity. And before getting to the end you will find out how Conrad, for all his agonies of disillusion, yet *does* get back his youth.

More English novels. "THE EARLY HISTORY OF JACOB STAHL," by J. D. Beresford (*Little-Brown*), is in the biographical, cold-blooded, realistic manner of H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett. Jacob's heart pumps Irish, German and Jewish blood, and he is a fantastic mix-

ture of dreamer and climber, poet and blackleg. When the beautiful Madeline Felmersdale, his first love, confesses to him that she is not chemically pure, his first impulse is to commit suicide—but what he actually does it to become the partner of her deviltries. Later on he marries another girl, or rather a lady with a past, and she first ruins him and then deserts him. At thirty-one he starts life all over again, and it is then that we bid him good-bye. Perhaps he will bob up again in another volume. Worse things might happen. This J. D. Beresford, indeed, has chosen good models and does them no dishonor. His writing rises far above the commonplace. In over five hundred pages he is never dull.

Not so Sir Arthur T. Quiller-Couch. His "BROTHER COPAS" (*Scribner*) is not without its incisive humor, its mordant touches of characterization, its scenes of high comedy; but it is also full of rather tedious discussions of various depressing subjects, chiefly ecclesiastical. The ancient English cathedral town of Merchester is the scene, and theological dons are to the fore. "PEOPLE OF POSITION," by Stanley Portal Hyatt (*Wessels-Bissel*), belabors British respectability. Jimmy Grierson, after ten years of knocking about the world, goes back to England to find the customs and ideals of his relatives unbearable. His criticism of their oppressive and insincere virtue takes the form of an overt act. That is to say, he picks up a woman from the Piccadilly procession, lives with her for a year or so, and then marries her. A "strong" story but withal one suavely told. The English know how to do such things. In "JANE OGLANDER," by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes (*Scribner*), it is not Jane herself but the satanic Athena Maule who most engages us. Athena, married to Richard Maule the great Hellenist, finds life with that ancient pundit extremely fatiguing, so she seeks relaxation by pursuing other men, including the celebrated General Lingard, whose heart really belongs to Jane. Old Maule

stands that sort of carrying-on, as they say in the South, for years. Then, growing impatient at last, he drops an overdose of chloral into the merry Athena's evening cup of chocolate, and in the morning the way is open for Jane to get back her General. A tale in the "Dodo" manner—clever enough, but rather depressing.

Of "DEMETER'S DAUGHTER," by Eden Phillpotts (*Lane*), I can tell you little, since I suffer from a constitutional antipathy to Phillpotts, as other folk suffer from constitutional antipathies to tobacco, marriage or the pollen of the golden rod, and so the reading of his books gives me unbearable agony. In lieu of a personal opinion, which would be plainly unjust, let me quote the opinions of two newspaper critics for whom I have high respect. One of them says that "in this story the characteristic powers of the author are displayed in unabated excellence"; the other says that the book is, in plan and execution, "a work which falls, as of right, into the first rank of modern fiction." Let me add further (to show how powerful and unreasonable are prejudices) that I am unable to read the tales of Edgar Allan Poe without snickering, or the heart-breaking pathos of Charles Dickens without swearing, or the romances of Sir Walter Scott without snoring. Such prejudices baffle the psychological investigator. Their origin is in little things—often in ultra-microscopic things. Apparent cause and real cause may be miles apart. For instance, the temptation is strong to say that I snore over Scott because he is prolix, but against that fine theory two facts stand, one being the fact that Scott is less prolix than Joseph Conrad, and the other being the fact that I do not snore over Conrad.

In view of all this, I make no effort to justify, upon reasonable grounds, my antipathy to Phillpotts. All that I can say is that it exists, that I deeply lament it and that I hope to be saved from gehenna in spite of it.



SHOPPING FOR THE SMART SET

By Marion C. Taylor

THE SMART SET SHOPPING DEPARTMENT will be glad to offer suggestions or answer questions regarding shopping and the New York shops. Readers of the SMART SET inquiring for names of shops where articles described are purchasable should enclose a stamp for reply, and state page and month. Address: "EDITOR, SMART SET SHOPPING DEPARTMENT."

THE weather is getting too warm to think very much about clothes.

One's mind wanders more often toward comfortable chairs, good books and long, cool drinks, I'm afraid; and the unfortunate woman who still has fittings to think of has my unbounded sympathy, for they are bad enough in any weather but most trying to both parties in the dog days. However, most of the town establishments along the Avenue are swathed in bright chintz coverings, and most of the buyers have gone over for new ideas. It seems to me, however, that the seasons are less distinct than ever—I mean less clearly defined. In the first place, although the calendar obligingly furnishes us with a date for the commencement of spring, we bring out our straw hats months before that, and the same is the case with summer, autumn and winter; even the Christmas numbers of the magazines are with us at Thanksgiving. But one thing this jumbling together of the seasons has done for us that is a distinct benefit—it has forced the buyers and heads of establishments to keep in closer touch with the markets of the world and to keep the news and the merchandise fresher and more "up to next week," as the papers have it.

Heretofore, we expected to see new things twice a year, and the rest of the time we contented ourselves with modifications and adaptations of these until the next six months rolled round and the

new batch was due. But now this is all changed, and fichus which may be possible this month are succeeded by capes the next and boleros the following. So that even now new ideas are constantly arriving from abroad, although comparatively few frocks, hats, etc. are imported just at this period, for, as I said, most women have assembled their wardrobes and have settled down to enjoy these hot days.

Frankly there is little news of change of styles to chronicle. I notice a tendency toward the long, tight sleeves which were launched late last winter; I discover some skirts to evening frocks flaring a trifle at the feet, and I see more broad stripes in silks, etc. than ever before. Hats have a tendency toward height, except in the formal ones, which are still large and graceful.

A New Idea

Not so very long ago an establishment started up here in town with one idea paramount, that it was possible to give out-of-town women a chance to buy the very best models domestic and foreign, of the very best materials and workmanship, at considerably below the prices asked in the exclusive Avenue shops, the only places one can find these models. So successful has this idea been that a unique mail order business is the result—unique in the fact that in the minds of most women cheapness and

poor quality are synonymous with mail order, while in this case only the best of everything is given—workmanship, materials and designs.

I am giving this amount of space to a discussion of its merits because I think it is of as much value as anything I have been able to give my readers.

Before I go into further detail I must not forget a few facts which are most favorable—all mail or express charges are paid by the house, and if goods are not satisfactory they may be returned.

Wash Frocks

In looking over their models I found the following, which for desirability of design, workmanship and materials have my heartiest endorsement. Of their reasonableness I shall leave you to judge.

First, at four dollars and ninety-five cents I saw two charming dresses: one a striped gingham trimmed in plain color, with a band of the plain material on the bottom of the skirt; the other a linen made with a sailor waist and a skirt with plaits stitched to hip depth—both well cut and well made of good quality materials. Then at six dollars and twenty-five cents I saw a very pretty model of striped gingham trimmed with white eyelet embroidery, and showing a band of the plain color linen part of the way around the skirt. For seven dollars I saw a cool little striped dimity, as dainty as could be, and for seven dollars and fifty cents I saw a veritable bargain, a simple tucked model of white marquisette, with kimono sleeves and yoke, waist and sleeve trimming of Irish crochet lace. I don't know when I have come upon better value.

Summer Evening Frocks

It is so essential to have an assortment of fresh, cool little evening and dancing frocks that one does not usually care to put a great deal of money into them. The following are in good taste and nice enough to be worn at the smartest resorts, but quite inexpensive. First, a figured marquisette trimmed

with Irish lace and embroidered dots is a handsome semi-evening frock, also splendid for afternoon wear at only twenty-nine dollars and a half.

Then a little soft chiffon frock, very simple but effective, trimmed with smocking and embroidery for only twenty-two fifty. At thirty-nine dollars and a half a demure frock of chiffon is made over China silk. It is a copy of a French model, and is made in tunic style with messaline showing at the bottom. Narrow bead fringe trims it, and a smart silver cord finishes it at the waist line. One especially suitable for a miss's frock is utterly charming in its simplicity. The waist is seamless and the round neck is finished with a yoke of Val lace; tiny bows of satin trim it in front and also decorate the bottom of the skirt, which is laid in soft plaits. Val lace also trims the tiny sleeves. It sells for only fifteen dollars and seventy-five cents.

Also for misses or small women is a soft crêpe de Chine frock, the waist of which is trimmed with real lace and tiny crêpe de Chine roses, which also trim the skirt. This sells for but thirty-four fifty.

Lingerie Models

In the lingerie frocks the models are those shown by the very smartest Avenue shops and dressmakers. At thirteen fifty a very becoming one is trimmed with point venise, pin tucks and eyelet embroidery. At sixteen twenty-five is a handsome one of eyelet embroidery, and at nineteen fifty a most effective one of all-over filet and Cluny insertion.

The handmade dresses are cheaper than any shop in New York sells them. For instance, two exquisitely dainty models in the finest quality *point d'esprit*, one of which sells for eighty-five dollars in an exclusive establishment here in town, are thirty-two fifty and thirty-five seventy-five, while a thoroughly charming flowered dimity, finely machine made but tucked by hand, is trimmed profusely with real Val lace and a touch of Irish in the waist and is only twenty-nine fifty.

For the Seashore

Some splendid hats I came across the other day are ideal for shore wear and very becoming. Their reasonable prices put them within the reach of everyone at the season when a fresh hat gives one a new lease on life. The brims were of white chip, in various shapes to shade the face; the low, round crowns were of white moiré, with an encircling band, finished with a smart flat bow of white or colored grosgrain ribbon. I admired an all-white one with a purple ribbon at nine seventy-five. Another style showed a Panama brim and a hemp crown in various colors for ten seventy-five. A charming pink hemp one had its crown covered and its brim faced with dotted swiss, with trimming of a delicate pink flower, at only eight ninety-five. This was a rolling sailor effect. I also saw an attractive motor hood, just soft shirred chiffon with no lining, and intended merely as a slight protection to one's hair in the short evening motor trips one so often takes in the summer. It was shown in all light colors for only two fifty.

Inexpensive Blouses

At a certain shop well known for the variety of inexpensive French goods shown, one may find soft French batiste handmade blouses handsomely hand-embroidered made in the popular kimono model, with fine hand-tucked collars and cuffs for three dollars and fifty cents. A more elaborate model, inset with lace, is only five dollars.

Silk Shirts

Tailored silk shirts for golf, tennis and general country wear are almost indispensable, and there is one shop in town that makes a specialty of them and turns them out perfect in every detail.

But unfortunately, like all good things, they come high, and many of us must forget these luxuries and content ourselves with some that are less expensive. After quite a little searching I have found an admirable shirt of white wash silk made with the usual plain

shoulders and turri-back cuffs, and showing a yoke in back, which sells for the reasonable sum of three ninety-five. It is accompanied by a detachable turn-down collar, and a feature I particularly admired was the front buttoning, which was perfectly plain, showing no box pleat. These waists are also shown in the striped wash silks so very popular this season, and in this case are made with the addition of a pocket, a feature I do not especially like, but which can easily be ripped off as it is stitched on the outside.

Linen Skirts

Four splendid models of linen skirts, which are sold only in the best Avenue shops, may be ordered in one's measurements from an establishment here in town for a little over half the usual cost. They are all made of the finest qualities of materials—and to my mind well made, well fitting linen skirts are absolutely essential, as well as a most sensible purchase, since the styles seldom change a great deal and they last several seasons. All of these models, sketches of which with samples will be sent on application, button down the side front, the only sensible way to have a linen skirt made. The prices run from five seventy-five to seven ninety-five, and for the quality of materials and workmanship are remarkably reasonable.

Petticoats

Skirts are still far from wide, although the exaggerated yard-and-a-half width is no longer seen. Petticoats naturally conform to that idea, and are straight, scant and very different in appearance from those of former years. For instance, a straight petticoat of black-and-white striped satin has three puffs of black chiffon, through which a bright-colored chiffon underruffle shows. At the side are three stiff geisha bows of satin of the same color—cerise, green, etc. This sells for only seven ninety-five. When they do have ruffles—and although the style is dying out many of them do—they are scant, side plaited and hang quite straight. Another, also

of black-and-white striped silk, had insertions of black lace, set high enough up in the deep ruffle to wear well, under which a colored silk ruffle showed. This was only five ninety-five, and was a splendid choice, as it might be worn with so many costumes.

But prettier, newer and more likely to appeal in summer than any of these are the beautiful chiffon skirts I mentioned a few months ago. In two tones, one under the other, they sell for only ten dollars, and come in the most beautiful color combinations imaginable. Another pretty style for boudoir or evening use comes in white wash silk, with a wide ruffle of Val lace, and sells for nine seventy-five.

For morning wear I think the French wash petticoats, which are made of a strong, soft, washable fabric, and show a pattern of fine colored stripes or of dots on a white ground, repeating the color in the buttonholing on the flounces at the bottom, are about the best choice. They are two seventy-five and three seventy-five, and wear wonderfully well.

Bathing Suits

I cannot say that I have noticed any distinct innovations in bathing suits this season, unless it be the growing tendency toward brighter colors and the gradual doing away of the old bloomers and the substitution of tights. However, I saw the following suits in a shop that has recently opened a splendid bathing department, and I found all of them good values and smart styles. I personally do not approve of light-colored bathing suits—that is, brilliant colors, stripes, Persian effects and the like—because I haven't seen one woman in a hundred whom they become. Nothing is trimmer or smarter looking than a dark blue or black suit which fits well, with perhaps a little suggestion of white or a bright color at the neck. I saw a simple blue satin one which opened down one side of the simple tucked round-necked waist and skirt. The opening was finished in a little design of braiding not unlike the wall of Troy design, which gave it a refined, dainty air and yet kept

it dark in tone. It was twelve dollars and ninety-five cents. An odd one was made of a novelty brilliantine, showing a small figure scattered over its surface. The neck was trimmed with a dull blue satin braid embroidered in black. This was twelve seventy-five. A very heavy satin suit, simply made, with a V-shaped neck, had the bloomers with it and was thirteen seventy-five.

For only three ninety-five I saw a good-looking mohair one with a Dutch neck trimmed in white braid that was very pretty indeed, while for six ninety-five a princess panel effect had braid embroidery and was piped in white.

The tights to the knee, to wear instead of the bloomers, are a dollar ninety-five in cotton or lisle; the combinations in Italian silk, which many people who wear a corset in bathing prefer, are five seventy-five. In jersey they are two ninety-five; with the stockings the mercerized tights are two ninety-five, cotton a dollar ninety-five and the silk nine seventy-five. For general use the mercerized are very satisfactory, although many people prefer a separate stocking with the knee length tights.

I saw a very pretty little bathing cap in this same establishment, made like a mob cap with a bow in front and a little ruffle to frame the face. In rubberized taffeta it sells for four ninety-five.

For the Mountains

A splendid khaki suit I saw the other day has many uses. For horseback and mountain use it is ideal. The skirt is a divided one, simply unbuttoning front and back, with elastic bands inside to hold it down. The coat is a Norfolk with comfortable pockets. To accompany it are khaki breeches which are well and comfortably made. The suit sells for thirteen seventy-four, and the breeches for four ninety-six.

Cleansing Cream

In the warm weather a good cleansing cream is essential, and many people do not care for a decidedly oily grease

cream. For them I can highly recommend a cream I delight in using. It cleanses without giving one an oil bath, and when one is through the face feels soft and smooth even without the addition of powder. Besides this, its odor is really delicious. It sells in twenty-five and fifty-cent and one dollar packages.

Face Powder

So many inquiries have come into this department regarding a good face powder that I have decided to give a little space to one that, although not new, has been the most acceptable that I have been able to find—and the search has been an almost never ending one. This powder has been sold for some years in just one odor, a very satisfactory one, but demand has resulted in an assortment of flower odors in the same powder that are so remarkably natural that when you pick up a box of carnation or jasmine you do not need to look at the label, as is usually the case. The odors are jasmine, violet, carnation, rose, iris, muguet and heliotrope. A choice is difficult, but the jasmine is most appealing to those who like a heavy odor, and the carnation is delightfully spicy and refreshing. They sell for one dollar and seventy-five cents, but are well worth the money.

The same firm has a less expensive powder it is just introducing which has much to be said to its credit. The odor is most refreshing and the texture remarkably smooth. It sells for only seventy-five cents a box.

Oriental Toilet Accessories

There are so many poor imitations of Oriental toilet articles on the market that unfortunately it has caused a doubt to rise in the minds of many people as to whether Oriental goods as a whole are cheap and poor in quality. A great mistake, for if one but goes to the right source one can procure such delightful sachet powders, perfumes and the like that one's faith is immediately restored.

A new odor has just been placed on the market, that of the wistaria, which

for those who like the delicate perfume of the Japanese flower is a refreshing and decidedly refined odor. It sells for only one dollar per ounce in the perfume, and is sold in the toilet water sachets, etc. at correspondingly reasonable prices.

Another novelty which appeals to me especially for linen closets, etc. is the granular form of sandalwood, which may be sprinkled through one's linen drawers or chest and holds the odor so much better than ordinary sachet. For those who like the pungent, spicy perfume of sandalwood there is a remarkably soft talcum powder, highly absorbent and antiseptic, which sells for but twenty cents for four ounces.

Conveniences

Among the new ideas in summer furniture the following articles appealed to me as convenient.

First, a sewing table of white enamel, about two feet square, has a scalloped edge of the wood, the center part being cretonne. It has a deep wooden pocket, cretonne-lined, which pulls out from underneath, and as the top is lifted up a box is disclosed which contains a tray one-half the width of the box, divided into two compartments which slide from side to side. Finished in a splendid quality of cretonne, this is only thirteen dollars and a half, and would be finished of course, in any material to match one's furnishings.

Second, a window seat—or one might use it with artistic results at the end of one's bed—four feet six inches long, of white enamel, having a five-inch or so railing with spindles around sides and back. It contains six wooden shelflike boxes under the seat, three on each side. These, like the cushion, are done in cretonne, and the covers of the boxes open in the middle, so that one does not have to pull them entirely out to get at them. This is thirty dollars without the cretonne, but as the workmanship is excellent I do not think the price high.

Next a splendid couch hammock made with wire springs, with legs which conveniently fold under so that it may be used as a bed or couch if necessary—and

how many times necessities like these spring up in camp or cottage life! The mattress is covered with the natural colored khaki cloth, which also forms a scalloped valance in the front, and of which the head and feet rests were made, as well as the adjustable back which forms a wind shield. This is fourteen seventy-five, and the standard five dollars and a half. Effective striped awnings about six feet broad and fully eight feet long sell for seven dollars, and are splendid when it is intended to use one of these hammocks on the lawn.

A Hong Kong chair in wicker is not unlike the Yokohama chair in wood which I described several months ago. It is one of those real lounging chairs which one associates with a good book—and a long cool beverage. This one, the seat or extension of which is in one piece, curves up at the knees and has a foot brace. The back has a gentle comfortable slope, and one of the broad wicker arms anticipates the need and has a round hole for a glass to sit in. It sells for twenty-three dollars and twenty-five cents without the cretonne cushions, which add to its attractiveness. It can, of course, be stained any desired color.

For Porch Use

One of the prettiest little accessories I have come across in some time is a cordial jug of French porcelain in red, blue, brown or green, an exact reproduction of the "little brown jug" of ancient fame. It has a silver-trimmed spout and rests on a silver holder. Tiny glasses, two, four or six, may accompany it if desired, and are on either side, in little holders. A wicker handle makes it easy to carry about. The stopper is attached by a chain to prevent its straying. The jug comes in quart or pint size. It makes a most appropriate gift, and is especially likable at this season of the year when most people adjourn after dinner to the cooler porch for coffee and cordial.

Another novelty along this line is a lemon squash service. A wooden tray has in the center a suspended lemon squeezer—the most acceptable kind—

one bowl pressing down into another, which holds half of a lemon, and squeezing the lemon into a small punch glass which stands underneath. At one side a knife rests in a little groove, and opposite it, on the other side, is a flat, round wooden board to cut the lemon on. At either end are two tall inviting looking glasses with long spoons. At the back is a small round sugar bowl and spoon on a standard, and at either side, attached to it, are oval receptacles to hold lemons. One can also purchase the lemon squeezer accompanied by a single glass and a spoon and knife, but the service *à deux* is much more apt to be useful.

Another novelty is a sandwich or cake stand of princess plate, a splendid wearing metal, by the way, which does not wear off and needs little cleaning. This stand is a skeleton affair, a smaller reproduction of the wooden muffin stands, and has two, three or four attractive china plates.

Attractive Tea China

Most people are familiar with the Awaji chinaware, even if they don't know it by name. It is best known in plain green, red or yellow, and comes from China. Its plainness and the richness of its color tones make it valuable for inexpensive decorative effects, and it is greatly used for tea table, porch use and the like. It is now being shown in a soft twilight blue that is most appealing and a cool restful color for summer use. A tea set of three pieces—and the shapes are decidedly picturesque—sells for from two dollars to two and a half, the cups being only fifty cents, plates from thirty to seventy-five and lovely bowls from fifty cents to three dollars. Besides these I saw odd boats for flowers and any number of odd pieces, coffee pots, vases and the like. Now on its way over from China, to arrive soon, is a beautiful new pattern which shows a delicate spray of white plum blossoms against this gray-blue background. Nothing more artistic in inexpensive china could be imagined. To accompany these the flat Chinese straw trays are most appro-

priate, and these sell for from fifty cents to a dollar seventy-five.

The larger muffin stands are shown in most attractive wickerwork, too, and the trays which accompany them show bright flowered cretonne under their glass tops. But newer than these are the "moats" for bottled beverages such as beer, ginger ale, etc. These are large deep, oblong wicker baskets, with handles like a market basket and alternate partitions for bottles and glasses. In the center is a small glass-covered tray showing the cretonne underneath which is intended for crackers, cakes or to hold a bowl of cracked ice. These come in several sizes and various colors, and are just as smart as they can be.

At the same shop I saw some new wicker lamps that are decidedly effective. The bases are of various-shaped wicker baskets, and the umbrella shades show wicker top and bottom with a band of cretonne through the middle, a variation of the all-wicker or all-cretonne shade.

Baggage

Hand baggage is today as great an indication of one's position in life as any accessory I know of, and nothing is more noticeable. Most women have taken to carrying the little cabin top handbags, which are boxlike in appearance and open in the center, to disclose comb, brush, mirror and the other of the necessary toilet articles. These are generally shown in dark-toned Morocco. But one frequently sees nothing but the little jewel cases, much like these in effect but much smaller. I had no idea that these were so reasonable until I priced some the other day in a well known leather shop in town and found them at from three fifty to four seventy-five. They would make splendid bridge prizes, for while many women would not carry them often, there are nevertheless many occasions when one hesitates to pack one's jewelry in a trunk and feels safer with it in one's own keeping.

A remarkable bag I saw recently is just large enough for the over-night necessities. It was thirteen and one-half by eleven inches, seal leather,

grained to resemble walrus, and weighed only three pounds, the lightest it has ever been possible to make any bag of this size.

A Smart Coin Purse

At this season one's purses or bags should be as dainty as possible, and a new idea of one of the smart Avenue jewelers has been universally commended. A tiny gold mesh bag is round at the top and just about the size of a fifty-cent piece; from there it drops to a point and looks like an inverted candle snuffer and is about as large. The round, flat gold top lifts up to disclose a small vanity box just large enough for a tiny puff and a bit of powder. It is a dainty trifle for women who appreciate particular accessories.

For Men

I do not notice any startling innovation for men, unless it be a new bathing suit and a new tennis shirt. The former, called the "Pacific Coast swimming suit," gives the appearance of a two-piece suit, but being joined at the waist, is much more convenient, they tell me. It sells for four dollars and a half.

The sweater knit bathing suits have almost entirely supplanted the thinner qualities, and come from four to six dollars. They are so much warmer, dry so much more quickly and yet are so light in weight that it is a wonder they were not known of sooner than just a few years ago when they first put in an appearance. The new tennis shirt is a combination of shirt and knee drawers, and its makers claim that it does away with all possibility of its "riding up" while the player is in action.

Speaking of tennis and bathing, it seems pertinent to discuss briefly correct dress for the various pastimes indulged in at this season. I think most well dressed men are undoubtedly conservative, and what latitude they allow themselves in "outing" clothes is more in the selection of ties or some little accessory than in the cut or style of the clothes themselves.

For the mountains a new and exclu-

sive garment, very smart and most becoming, is a Norfolk coat of Scotch worsted, which comes in the wood tones browns, greens, grays, etc., and is especially desirable for wear in the woods where knickerbockers and heavy worsted stockings, lacking the fancy tops we used to see, are the accepted dress.

For tennis one sees little but white flannel trousers—much to be preferred over those with stripes—with either flannel or silk shirts, fancy striped ties of most vivid colors and white rubber-soled shoes. In fact, rubber-soled shoes in tan are splendid for general wear. I see so many men wearing them into town in the morning, and I presume they are a comfort.

Ties

I notice nothing better than the smart silk bandanna effects in ties for country wear, but I have also seen some well dressed men in town wearing rather long, narrow and thick looking bow ties of the old blue and white polka-dotted silk, fair-sized dots quite close together, the tie showing pointed ends.

Socks

A novelty in socks that I admire but about which I have heard much discussion shows the stripes running round and in the most vivid color combinations. One of the best houses in town sponsors them, but I cannot say I admire the very vivid combinations. However, the black ones encircled by fine white stripes about an inch apart are very good-looking for wear with the tan rubber-soled low shoes I just mentioned.

Accessories

A little pigskin case shaped like a shoe horn contains a nickel horn, which pulls out but doesn't come out, with a button-hook which flattens up against the outside; the leather part acts as a handle. It only costs a dollar, and is a convenient little thing to slip in one's bag. Pigskin lapel watch chains have oddly shaped gold-plated monograms and are only four dollars. Pigskin garters that refuse to wear out and have just enough elasticity are only one dollar a pair.

Brushes with which it is quite possible to get results—I did not believe it until I saw it demonstrated—have only four rows of bristles, but these of a splendid quality. They have ebony backs and fit in Morocco silk-lined cases, for only three dollars and seventy-five cents.

A Light Weight Waterproof Boot

A novelty in a waterproof hunting boot is acutely light in weight, even when it becomes wet, as it is made of canvas reinforced with leather, and is possible of ventilation so that it is not as uncomfortable as most heavy boots. Its makers claim that it will dry out in an hour. It comes to a little below the knee and sells for only seven dollars.

A Novelty

For your golfing friend a little luck god called "Foozle" sits on a ball and insures him against all golf calamities. Verses on the bottom make use of the golfing terms in advice on life in general. He sells for seventy-five cents.

July Records

So many people are dependent upon the phonograph for their dance music that this month's records show several good waltzes and twosteps. The best are a twostep Medley No. 10, which combines such popular tunes as "Grizzly Bear," "Italian Love," etc., and on the back of which are the "Love and Spring Waltzes," "Dear Delightful Women" and the "Luxemburg Waltz" of Lehar. In popular selections there are a number of really splendid records, George Cohan's "You Won't Do Any Business if You Haven't got a Bond," "All Alone," "That Ever Loving Love" and that very pretty "For Every Boy Who's Lonely There's a Girl Who's Lonely Too." For a good ragtime tune "That Mississippi Dippy Dip" is catchy.

One of the finest of the month's selection is the Cavalleria Prelude, given by Vessella's Italian Band. I have seldom if ever enjoyed it more. A rhythmic Spanish air is a "Bolero" of Arditi, and Liza Lehmann's "Ah! Moon of My Delight," from "In A Persian Garden," is beautifully sung by McCormack.



THERE is a two-word phrase blazoned in every city in the land which pithily expresses the spirit of the day. Those two eloquent words are "Quick Lunch." Some future analyst of our times will head a chapter "The Great Quick Lunch Principle," and trace its workings throughout American life. He will note the quick lunch sermon and the quick lunch play, quick lunch legislation, quick lunch marriage and divorce, quick lunch literature and art, and, not least conspicuous, the quick lunch magazine, which with such breezy audacity every month regulates the universe.

THE SMART SET, happily, undertakes to regulate nothing. It seeks only to entertain, and to entertain minds that are not primitive. As "A Magazine of Cleverness," it lives in its age, and its editors, realizing the temper of the age, try so to do their work that he who runs may read. Gone are the days when a magazine was apparently based on the idea that he who read might run. If anybody runs from THE SMART SET we would give something for a series of moving pictures of the incident. Of course, people who take their pleasures sadly may disapprove of THE SMART SET. But they don't run. They go on reading—from the Table of Contents to "Something Personal."

However, it is not the man behind the times, but the man ahead of his times we are concerned with just now. The latter is inevitable in a quick lunch

era. If ever a magazine kept abreast of the times, surely THE SMART SET has done so. Yet, no matter how alert and original a publication may be, some impatient devotee of the Quick and Hot will always arise to call it Slow Coach. Last month Mr. Thayer printed a letter from such a critic. To him our June issue seemed stale and unprofitable. "We sated readers," he declared, "want the new voice crying in the wilderness."

Now we, too, want the new voice. The editorial ear is ever cocked toward the wilderness in eager expectation. And to what astonishing things we listen! There was the author who wished to submit an eighty-five-thousand-word skit on "The Everlasting Gospel," which he considerably offered to have typed at our expense at the rate of ten cents a folio. There was the writer, self-described as "new and strong," who had written a piece with the deliberate purpose of "striking women right where they live." "Its aim," he said, "is to hit the interest of woman—to fill the heart of woman—to give woman what she wants and lots of it." Cruel fate prevented our accepting the offer of one who wrote:

I am an *Empire Press* man. If you want me to write for you I will send you somme words at 1¢ each. I have a \$5.00 story right here—

and enclosed a disquisition on "The Need to Talk Languages." Still more green in our memory lingers the Voice from the hinterland who cried:

My work is philosophical, rationalistic, up-to-date—nothing about beautiful snows or spring flowers. It is all *red blood* verse, every poem ending in a climax which is a blow between the eyes.

My work will be subject to the following conditions:

- 1st. Ownership of MS. reserved by me.
- 2d. Reasonable compensation.
- 3d. Conspicuous display. By this I mean that my work must appear in unusual type and must occupy a page by itself. No other arrangement than this will be considered for a moment.

- 4th. If possible I would like to have the forms to reprint my stuff from.

I fully realize that in giving you an opportunity to present to the world a new writer, I am denying myself the benefits of illustrations other magazines would be able to afford. I am willing to close my eyes to that feature.

If these arrangements suit you, I will commence, on receipt of your reply, to send you my stuff.

I have been told that nothing outside of the Bible, Omar or Shakespeare can compare with it.

So much for the direct attack. Other new Voices strike a minor note and chronicle the moving tale of their literary apprenticeship, their precise manner of wooing the Muse, and, at times, the prattlings of their babes. Who could fail to give a sympathetic reading to the manuscript of a writer who characterized herself in these terms:

I am the possessor of a thorough instruction, of some artistic erudition, and especially my love for composition is such that it gives me no rest until I have written down what vibrates in my heart. Among my literary compositions are to be found forty-three lyric poems, essays, character sketches and two stories which I have in my head. Not one of these has been published, for I count but twenty summers. They are all written in French, but I can translate them into English with ease, for I am familiar with the sweet language of Albion.

Some of the new Voices speak but diffidently. Once came a lilting lyric with an apology:

I have a neighbor whose phonograph has been dinning into my ears every night for a month Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar." The effect upon me is shown in the enclosed lines. You know once in a while a man gets just desperate.

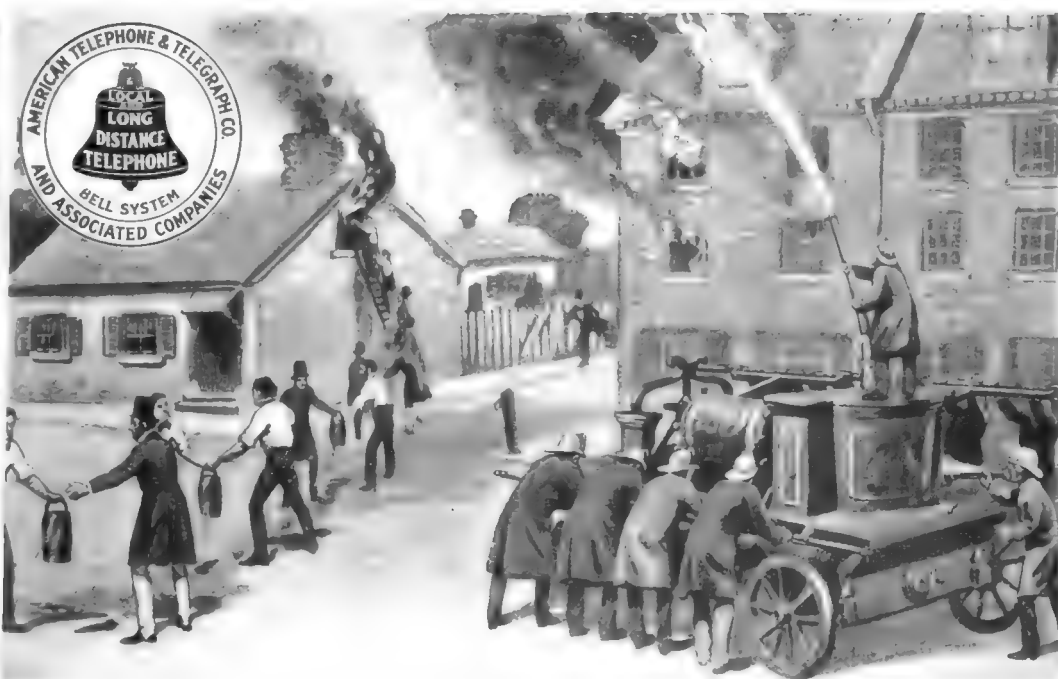
And another equally self-deprecatory:

By perusing the enclosed type-written papyrus you will discover what I've gone and done. I do not attempt to do this for a living as I work in an automobile factory and get 15 per.

Yes, we listen, and now and again a new Voice has something fresh and vital to say. During the past decade no American periodical has started more writers on the road to success than THE SMART SET. O. Henry was an obscure beginner, unknown to the leading magazines, when he came to us in 1902. We were the first to recognize poetic talent in Theodosia Garrison, Elsa Barker and the late Father Tabb, as we were the first to discern the story telling gift in Gelett Burgess, Paul Laurence Dunbar, James Branch Cabell, Justus Miles Forman, Gouverneur Morris, Josiah Flynt, Guy Wetmore Carryl, Josephine Preston Peabody, Edna Kenton and the Baroness von Hutton.

But for the type of reader we quoted at the outset, no sooner does a writer emerge from obscurity than he loses charm. Our critic coupled his demand for the voice from the wilderness with a reproach that we should have admitted certain well known names to our June Table of Contents. "Can a leopard change his spots, a writer his style?" he queried. At first that sounds rather epigrammatic. Presently, however, we discover that it means quite as much if you turn it end for end and say: "Can a writer change his spots, a leopard his style?" It doesn't explain why a style vigorous enough to gain a hearing or a serviceable collection of spots should be abandoned. Surely he doesn't assume that an author's individuality can be put on or off like a coat? And surely he doesn't believe that a trained writer is less likely to write a brilliant story than a mere beginner? What he evidently had in mind was the melancholy fact that too often forces that seem inexhaustible soon spend themselves and leave only a trick of style behind. But he cannot seriously maintain that THE SMART SET values a man's name above his product. No magazine worth its purchase price feeds on husks. THE SMART SET wants cleverness and originality, come whence they may. But we hold up a high standard to our contributors. Old or new, famous or unknown, they must have something to say and say it well.

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AROMATIC DELICACY
MILDNESS
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At your club or dealer's
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BORATED TALCUM

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For Prickly Heat and Sunburn
Relieves all Skin Irritations

Sample Box for 4c stamp

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NEWARK, N. J.



Trade-Mark



THE SMART SET IDEA

"Its Prime Purpose Is to Provide Lively Entertainment for Minds That Are Not Primitive."

Behind every magazine that makes its mark there is assuredly an impelling Idea, or Spirit, or Purpose—call it what you will. It may be simple, it may be complex; it may be frank and obvious, it may be unavowed; it may be genuine and worthy, it may be specious and delusive; but it is there, ever-present and ever-active.

The Idea that shapes and animates the SMART SET Magazine may be stated in a few words. And it is well that it should be stated; for, although the constant readers of the magazine know its Spirit intimately, many of its casual readers have probably failed to realize that the magazine stands for Something Definite, and stands for it persistently.

Its Prime Purpose Is to Provide Lively Entertainment for Minds That Are Not Primitive.

It aims to present in each number—

A complete short novel of real distinction;

A generous number of short stories, written by men and women who have mastered the technique of the difficult art of story-telling, and who have the faculty of evoking the subtleties and humor and dramatic pulsations of character and life;

A satiric essay on some engaging topic of wide interest;

A one-act play of true merit;

The best verse of our best poets;

A little masterpiece of French prose, in the original;

A score or two of sparkling epigrams and witty "modern instances."

To do all or most of these things each month, and to do them always on the same high plane of interest and quality—

THIS IS

THE SMART SET IDEA

JOHN ADAMS THAYER CORPORATION

London

New York

Paris

Those products that are best are advertised

White Rock

suggestions for

Warm Weather



WHITE ROCK PUNCH

One pint of unfermented grape juice.
A small cup of granulated sugar.
Juice of two lemons and two oranges.
One quart of WHITE ROCK.
Plenty of Ice.
Add sliced fruit as desired.

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Don't tolerate a single blemish. Consult me—I will convince you that any defect marring your good looks can be eradicated. Every woman has some feature that should be improved to enhance her beauty.

SUMMER SPECIALTIES

Venetian Bleaching Cream eradicates tiny crow's-feet around eyes, removes dark neck lines caused by high collars; one application produces results. Jar, \$1.00.
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Eyelash Grower produces a thick, lustrous growth, increasing glossiness and length, beautifying eyes and face; absolutely harmless. Jar, \$2.00.

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NATURAL APERIENT WATER

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A Talk to Advertisers

During the past two weeks I have said to at least fifty prominent advertisers and advertising agents that Fiction is the backbone of magazine circulation. The unanimous answer has been, "Guess you're right."

I CLAIM that if the big magazines—the magazines that now carry the largest volume of advertising—should cut out Fiction they would drop at least one-half of their circulation within one year. If they eliminated Fiction the second year, the circulation would be cut in half again, and in three or four years they would have a circulation about as large as the *North American Review* or the *Atlantic Monthly*. It is an indisputable fact that Fiction is what the people really want, what they buy magazines for. Therefore, it seems only reasonable that if you give people the *cleverest Fiction magazine in the world*, your magazine will certainly attain a circulation of at least 200,000 or 300,000 copies monthly, or perhaps even 500,000. Some people seem to think that *heavy feature articles* are what give magazines character as advertising mediums. This line of reasoning is illogical and all wrong. The magazine that *really interests the reader the most* will just as surely have the greatest influence as an advertising medium.

At the present time, the circulation of SMART SET is 100,000 copies monthly. One hundred thousand people have been buying SMART SET every month for the past four or five years. They have not been *urged* to do it. It has been a *voluntary demand*. Now that a man of Mr. Thayer's great ability is directing the destiny of SMART SET, I know and you know that the circulation will increase month by month. It will be a steady, legitimate circulation, built up on the merit of the magazine alone.

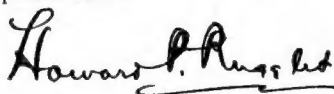
We are in the position of the manufacturer who has the best article of the kind in his line, and we have faith in our ability to sell this article to at least two or three hundred thousand of the best families of the United States.

SMART SET is treated by its readers and subscribers something in the same manner they would treat a \$1.50 novel. No one would think of throwing away a book. A

book is read by several members of the family, then loaned to a relative or a friend or a neighbor. The January issue of SMART SET is just as interesting and just as readable in the month of June as the June issue. There are no timely features to get out of date; and while you would not think of reading the January or March issue of another standard magazine in the month of June unless you wanted to read a *fiction* story, you would not hesitate picking up a six-months-old SMART SET. You know that you could read it from cover to cover and be sure of finding some clever story that would take your mind off your business or your troubles. This being so, it follows that a copy of SMART SET lives longer and will work three or four times harder for the advertiser than the ordinary standard magazine. That is why 100,000 circulation of the SMART SET class is worth to the advertiser at least 200,000 circulation of the ordinary magazine.

This is the policy of the Advertising Department:

1. Frank statement of circulation.
2. No medical or other questionable advertising accepted.
3. Trade or exchange contracts will not be accepted.
4. Agents' discount will not be allowed to any advertiser.
5. All advertisements must conform to the "SMART SET Style" of typography and illustration, to the end that the magazine as a whole may occupy a unique place in the publishing world.
6. The advertising section will be limited to a reasonable number of pages, so that the reader will not be burdened with too bulky a magazine and that the advertiser will get adequate returns.



Advertising Manager.

Libby's

for
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Luncheons
Picnics and
Suppers**

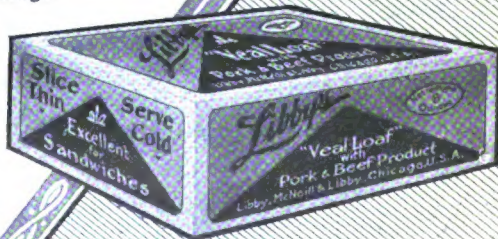


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